PETRIFIED FOREST: A Playground for Wildfire

Spring Baseball's Back!

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

arizonahighways.com MARCH 2003

Rebirth of an Arid Wildland

PICNIC SPOTS
Along Burro Creek

HIKE
From Tumacacori to Tubac

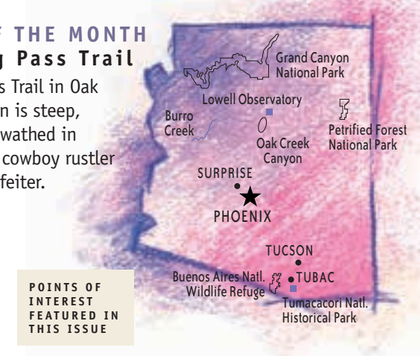
Survey the Skies at
LOWELL OBSERVATORY

SPRING BASEBALL'S BACK

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS
MARCH 2003

[THIS PAGE] Evening sunlight filtered through clouds washes the Pinaleno Mountains with muted lavender tones in southeastern Arizona's Coronado National Forest. DAVID W. LAZAROFF
[FRONT COVER] Following spring rains at the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge in southern Arizona, summer poppies abound in grassland below distant Baboquivari Peak. See story, page 6. JACK DYKINGA
[BACK COVER] They look like a jumble of logs in a streambed, but you can't burn these specimens of petrified wood at Blue Mesa in the Petrified Forest National Park in northeastern Arizona. See story, page 38. LARRY ULRICH


page 50



POINTS OF INTEREST FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

letters and e-mail

Great Staff

My October issue arrived, as usual a joy with its superb photography and fascinating stories and legends from cover to cover. "This Month In Arizona" and "Question of the Month" are nuggets of interesting information.

I was impressed with your title of the article "Sealed Secret." The eye-catching arrangement of the letters is an example of super artistry and deserves extra credit from every reader. Your fine magazine is truly blessed with a very special staff.

BARBARA LEAVITT, Woburn, MA

Thank you for noticing. Art Director Mary Velgos designed the layout.

Ned White Remembered

Thank you for the story about Ned White, the bard of Brewery Gulch ("Taking the Off-ramp," October '02). His parents, Annie and Patrick, were at Fort McDowell in the 1870s and ranched on the west bank of the Verde River north of the Army fort and one mile east of my home. In 1880 the Army burned their home for unknown reasons.

Ned was born at Camp Russell, Wyoming. He was Calamity Jane's godson. He was also a deputy sheriff in Tombstone only a few years after Wyatt Earp.

ROBERT MASON, Rio Verde

More on Moore

I have heard of "editorial license," but you went one step too far. The picture accompanying the article about Les Moore ("Taking the Off-ramp," October '02) shows that the last line is "NO MORE"; your text says "NO MOORE." Naughty, naughty!

W. A. "BILL" MARSH, Boise, ID

Oh, my. Or is it Ooh, my? The poor old editor, apparently, is not very good with his ooos.

Chiricahua Apaches

Upon reflection of Cindy Hayostek's "Destination" about the John Slaughter Ranch in the October 2002 issue, I must say that when I take my boys on our yearly trip to Cochise County, my thoughts lean more toward the hearty native peoples of the land. Imagine being driven from the Chiricahua Mountains to the San Carlos Reservation, then one of the most inhospitable places in the Territory. Not much to do in San Carlos in 1876.

CHRIS ZERVAS, Newark, DE

In the Spotlight

In "Ghosts Need Friends, Too" ("Taking the Off-ramp," October '02), the picture of the orb in the basement of the Grand Theatre is undoubtedly a spotlight "ghost." My mother, Irma Dalton Bond, filled the theater many times with audiences for her dance revues. In 1937, her "Ritzi-Rhythms" sold out two nights and turned away more than 200. The Douglas Arts and Humanities Association deserves applause for restoring this treasure.

Also, thanks for Cindy Hayostek's article about John Slaughter and his ranch. Cindy is a knowledgeable source of Cochise County history.

LEONA BOND BELL, Redmond, WA

Paria Canyon

Last September I was gathering gear and supplies for an upcoming backpack trip when the October issue of *Arizona Highways* arrived. A glance at the cover immediately caught my attention because the lead article was about my destination, Paria Canyon. Ruth Rudner's account of her hike was refreshing and held my interest by telling of the beauty and awe she felt in the canyon.

My trip is finished now, and although I didn't happen to get stuck in quicksand, I can empathize with her lament about wet feet.

My photos will never stand up to a comparison with David Muench's, but they will serve to enhance my memories of one of the most beautiful and spectacular places I have ever visited.

BARBARA PATTEE, Colorado Springs, CO

Austrian Travelers

Fans of *Arizona Highways* are even to be found in tiny Austria. I've subscribed to your magazine for about four years. The first few copies we got were the reason why we decided to travel your country. In summer 1999, we spent five incredibly gorgeous (though hot!!) weeks in the Southwest, and since then we've been dreaming of going back one day. So thanks to your great magazine, we had the best holiday ever!

ELFRIEDE MILLER, Salzburg, Austria

Oatman Burros

After four previous visits to your wonderful state, my husband and I decided we had to see the burros of Oatman.

We left Nevada and came through Bullhead City. Many miles later, going up, down, around and back again, we came to Oatman — and saw absolutely nothing. Buildings were closed, no people were in sight and not a burro anywhere. There was much evidence they'd been there, but where were they?

It was Sunday. Maybe they were in church.

ZADA HOAG, Haines City, FL

We are told that the shops in Oatman close at about 4:30 or 5 P.M. — and even the burros leave for the night. Sorry you missed them.

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

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PRODUCED IN THE USA

ARIZONA STATE ARCHIVES

taking the off-ramp

Arizona oddities, attractions and pleasures

On the Road Again, Without Swastikas

When Arizona's old State Highway Commission introduced its first numbered highway system in 1927, travelers drove on little more than dirt tracks that made up 17 state routes totaling 1,954 miles.

HOSTEEN KLAH, NAVAJO, 1926, HEARD MUSEUM

Early road maps and state highway markers didn't always jibe, leaving motorists to wonder where they had taken a wrong turn.

According to a 1927 *Arizona Highways* article explaining the numbering system, the state route markers, framed in the shape of the state, announced the route number and included representations of Arizona's rich Indian heritage: a black arrowhead bearing a white swastika in its center.

The swastika, known as a "whirling log," was widely used by Navajo, Hopi, Pima and other Arizona Indian tribes in their rugs, baskets, pottery and silver work. The ancient symbol signified well-being, prosperity and friendship.

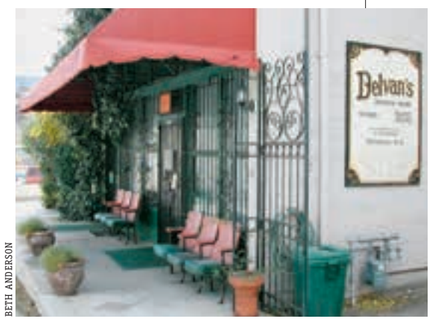
Sometime in the early 1940s, Arizona highway officials prudently removed the swastika from highway signs after Adolph Hitler and the Nazi party sullied this once-revered symbol. Members of the Navajo, Apache, Hopi and Papago (now Tohono O'odham) tribes renounced its use in their blankets, baskets, art objects and clothing.

Bed and Make Your Own #@&% Breakfast

Delvan Hayward jokes that her historic inn can be called a "bed and make your own (expletive) breakfast." Guests at Delvan's Drawing Room in tiny downtown Miami, east of Phoenix, aren't even insulted. "They love it; it makes them laugh," says the artist with an irreverent sense of humor who'd rather be behind an easel than a frying pan. That's fine with customers, who save a bundle on room rates and help themselves to a well-stocked kitchen.

Since purchasing the 1917 bar and miners' boardinghouse in 1996, Hayward has poured her creative energy into restoration work. As a result, the inn gained a spot on the National Register of Historic Places, becoming the first building in Miami to obtain this designation.

Information: (928) 473-9045.



BETH ANDERSON

PAUL MIROCHA, ACRYLIC/COLORED PENCIL, ON DISPLAY IN TERMINAL 4

Sky Harbor: Have Art, Will Fly

Now that travelers are spending more time than ever waiting for airplanes, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport offers a diversion that involves neither shopping nor sipping. The Sky Harbor Art Program ranks among the largest American airport art exhibits, totaling more than 200 permanent works and 15 exhibition spaces. Its centerpiece, the Terminal 4 gallery, displays a changing selection of Arizona art and artifacts.

Shows have included exhibits from 28 state parks, as well as work by nationally known artists with regional connections, such as landscape photographer Mark Klett and light-and-space master James Turrell. Passengers in the other two terminals can have an art experience at smaller displays — Barry Goldwater's photography and a retrospective of flight attendant costumes were recent exhibits. The airport also displays permanent installations throughout the airport, such as Terminal 4's giant thumblike ceramic sculptures, called dangos ("dumplings"), by Japanese artist Jun Kaneko.

THIS MONTH IN ARIZONA

1872 Tucson opens its **first permanent public school**. Students' **parents donate switches** and urge the teachers not to spare the rod.

1872 Tucson **citizens lynch four outlaws** in front of the jailhouse.

1888 Three **Vulture Mine guards** are stopped and **killed** on the road to Phoenix. A bar of **gold is stolen**.

1898 The General Land Office rules that **cutting mesquite on government property is illegal**. One week later they reverse the decision, declaring **that mesquite is not actually wood**.

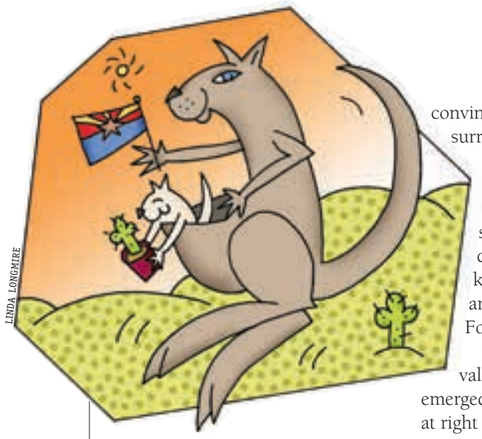
1903 Four **convicts escape** from Yuma Territorial Prison and **seize a yacht** on the Colorado River. They go aground on a sandbar and are caught in the desert.

1922 The world learns that amateur astronomer Clyde Tombaugh has **discovered the planet Pluto** at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff.

Worse Than Throwing It Out With the Bathwater

FROM AN ADVERTISEMENT in *The Arizona Daily Star*, July 29, 1897, praising the virtues of a new type of infant's feeding bottle:

"When the baby is done drinking, it must be unscrewed and put in a cold place under a tap. If the baby does not thrive on fresh milk, it should be boiled."



LINDA LONGMIRE

Kangaroos in Arizona?

Preposterous, you say. But a letter found in the Gatewood Collection at the Arizona Historical Society's Tucson library raises that intriguing possibility.

The collection contains the papers of Charles Gatewood, the brave lieutenant who rode into Geronimo's camp in 1886 and convinced him he should surrender.

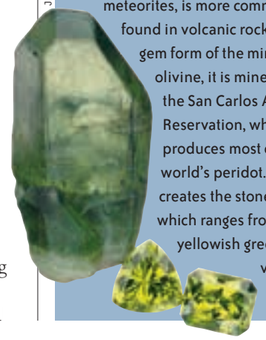
The files also contain a letter written in 1927 by Gatewood's wife to her son, Charles Jr. She describes spotting a kangaroo as she drove among the low hills west of Fort Apache:

"Going down one little valley, a black kangaroo thing emerged ahead of us and hopped at right angles across in front of us, in a leisurely way, never noticing us. It was small — four or five feet at most — jet black all over, with all the kangaroo characteristics, pouch, long strong hind legs, short arms held in front and [it] hopped just like the real thing.

"We saw it close and for some time, as it crossed and went between two of those bewildering round foothills. We inquired all about and no one had ever heard of them, except the Indians, who said they saw one now and then, very few, and didn't know what they were."

The Gem From Outer Space or Middle Earth

Peridot, known as the extraterrestrial gem because some peridot has hitched flights to Earth within meteorites, is more commonly found in volcanic rock. The gem form of the mineral olivine, it is mined on the San Carlos Apache Reservation, which produces most of the world's peridot. Iron creates the stone's color, which ranges from light yellowish green to vivid green.



JEFF SCOVIL

LIFE IN ARIZONA 1886-1944

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TUCSON

[ABOVE] The Beuhman Studio snapped the Owls Club's young aristocrats. Leo Goldschmidt stands at far right. [RIGHT] Renowned Chicago architect Henry Trost designed the club's second mansion, built in 1902.

Last of the Tucson Owls

A solitary owl adorns the ornate facade of the old mansion in downtown Tucson. This symbolic feathered fellow of the night had once been the icon of a group of Tucson gentlemen. Bachelors, every one of them, they also ran the town — politics, business, real estate. In 1886, they formed a brotherhood that became the Owls Club.

Members, given to fine dining, good parties and the single life, lived in a number of houses before the final nest with the owl in front.

By 1902, death and marriage started a decline in the club's population. One gentleman, Leo Goldschmidt, became sole proprietor and resident in 1912. To keep him company, he invited in family, including . . . GASP . . . female relatives. He died in 1944 at 91, being the last Owls Club member. The clubhouse became a business office, but one old plaster owl still stands guard.

To take a look, drive past 378 N. Main St., a few blocks north of Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block.

Live the Apache Way for Two Days

You sit on the ground, a rough spun blanket padding the earth. Smoke from a fire billows into your face and blocks the crisp starlight. Drums start to thump as you take a bite of frybread. A dance begins. A primal ballet, steeped in ritual, takes you back to the pre-European era of the land. The beat quickens, feet shuffle in broken steps and the Apache Crown Dance takes flight.

Apache blood doesn't have to lace your veins to enjoy this experience. Dennis Bregar, owner of Trail Blazers Adventures, offers wilderness trailrides in Greer from April through September. The rides end at the stretched-and-tanned hides of wickiups, your lodging for the night.

Once there, White Mountain Apaches will lead visitors through an evening of traditional native life. You'll learn how to make arrowheads and arrows, participate in ring-tossing, eat a traditional meal of frybread, venison and corn, and witness the ancient Apache Crown Dance. In the morning, you'll mount up and head back to town.

"These people [the Apaches] are who they say they are," Bregar declares. "They're fourth- and fifth-generation seers and storytellers."

Information: (866) 615-1900, or trailblazersadventures.com.

DAVID H. SMITH

LINDA LONGMIRE

Pick a Piece of Pie at Palominas Post

After a hard day of bird-watching, horseback riding or hiking in the Huachuca Mountains near Sierra Vista, head to the Palominas Trading Post and Country Diner on State Route 92. It's a casual, comfortable place, with rusted antique tools on display and an ancient philodendron whose 15-foot tendrils wrap around the walls. Regular customers bring their newspapers and think nothing of getting their own coffee refills.

Burgers and breakfasts both come highly recommended, as does the pan-fried cod special on Fridays and Saturdays.

But here's the real attraction: Be sure to save room, a lot of room, for dessert, and allow plenty of time for difficult decisions. Fifteen varieties of homemade pies are served every week.

Information: (520) 366-5529.

Catch Bisbee by Bus Tour

On March 12, 1908, the "Copper Capital of the World" opened the rails of the new Warren-Bisbee Railway, becoming Arizona's only true interurban railway. Designed and operated by the Calumet and Arizona Mining Company, the electric trolley transported miners the 4 miles from the state's first planned community of Warren to the mines in Bisbee.

"For five cents a day, you could ride the rails," says Boyd Nicholl, curator at the Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum. "Before the railway, there was little transportation available, so people tended to live where they worked. The trolley changed all that."

In 1928, the trolley was discontinued to make way for a bus line. Warren has long since been gobbled up by Bisbee's growth. Only a few pieces of track remain embedded in the dusty streets, but visitors still can discover Bisbee's raucous past on historic tours offered by the Bisbee Trolley Car Company.

The modern versions of Bisbee's trolley cars, comfortable buses reminiscently painted, leave five times daily, Friday through Monday, and follow much of the original trolley's tracks. Some of the historic places seen on the narrated tours include Brewery Gulch, the town's once-notorious row of bars and brothels; the Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum, America's first rural affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution; the Copper Queen Hotel, built in 1902 by the Copper Queen Mining Company; Warren Ballpark, the oldest ballpark in Arizona; and Lavender Pit, a yawning 900-foot open-pit mine.

Information: (520) 940-7212 or online, www.bisbeetrolley.com.

BISBEE TROLLEY CAR COMPANY

Question of the Month

Q Who first referred to U.S. Route 66, which cut across Arizona, as "**The Mother Road?**"

A **John Steinbeck** popularized Route 66 in his 1939 novel ***The Grapes of Wrath***, set during the Great Depression. "66 is the path of a people in flight, refugees from dust and shrinking land, from the thunder of tractors and . . . from the twisting winds that howl up out of Texas, from the floods that bring no richness to the land and steal what little richness is there. **66 is the mother road, the road of flight.**"

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BUENOS AIRES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SURVIVING AGAINST THE ODDS

Bobwhite Quail, Pronghorn Antelope and Their Grassland Habitat Struggle Bravely for Life

Text by PETER ALESHIRE Photographs by JACK DYKINGA

I stood irresolute before the locked gate in the dark of a monsoon night. With the gate lock's keypad unaccountably missing, I wondered if Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge Manager Wayne Shifflett was messing with me.

I'd already spent a storm-tossed day on the grassy 118,000-acre refuge — established 60 miles southwest of Tucson to preserve the habitat of the masked bobwhite quail, the pronghorn antelope and other grassland-dependent species. I marveled at the profuse summer poppies, the wealth of birds and the undulating grass.

In 18 years, this federal refuge has salvaged a remnant of the glorious grasslands that covered much of southeast Arizona before a century of intense grazing, invading non-native grasses and suppressed wildfires left the ground nearly bare. Oak and sycamore trees grace Brown Canyon, which is located at the northern end of the refuge. Grasslands dominate the refuge, but the area also includes the bird-thronged solace of Arivaca Creek and Arivaca Cienega. Brown Canyon cuts toward Baboquivari Peak, which the Tohono O'odham Indians believe forms the broken umbilical cord between heaven and Earth and where the Creator, *I'itoi*, still lives.

At day's end, photographer Jack Dykinga and I had stood staring at the stormy sunset reflected in the pond where Shifflett plans to establish threatened Chiricahua leopard frogs. Dykinga stood in the pond fretting, muttering and hoping the setting sun would break through clouds on the horizon to illuminate the thunderheads reflected in the pond's surface. Unlike Dykinga, I was spared the tyranny of lugging a 4x5 landscape camera as I inhaled the fragrant, ozone-tinged air and wished a bobwhite quail would pick that moment to flush out of the waving grass.

But the sun never found Dykinga's thunderhead, the quail never flushed and the storm gathered overhead — reminding me to seek shelter for the night. Which brings us back to that locked gate. Insisting that I should not miss visiting Brown Canyon with its ranch house converted into a 16-bed Environmental Education Center, Shifflett had instructed me to drive up the 5 miles of narrow dirt road off State Route 286 in the

KEVIN KIBSEY

[LEFT] Innocently white but poisonous, a sacred datura rises above a profusion of morning glory blooms in Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge southwest of Tucson.
[TOP] The refuge's reclaimed desert grasslands provide habitat for masked bobwhite quail, including this youngster, hatched at the onsite breeding facility.

[LEFT] Under a cloudy evening sky, arrowhead plants protrude from the Buenos Aires refuge's pond, where managers hope to establish threatened Chiricahua leopard frogs.
[ABOVE] Shy, white-faced pronghorns bound across grassland dotted with mesquite at the refuge.

dark, key in the code to open the gate, and drive another 3 or 4 miles up to the center. Brown Canyon is open to the public for guided tours and seminars only, but since the center was unoccupied, I was granted the special privilege of spending the night there in splendid solitude.

Except I couldn't find the keypad. I finally located a locked box on the backside of the gate and decided that Shifflett must have neglected to give me the key to open the keypad box. I felt sure he was sitting snug in his little house by the refuge headquarters, chuckling.

I pondered the sky, a patchwork of clouds, stars and moon: perfect night for a walk unless the monsoon resumed. So I grabbed my duster, my camera, my toothpaste and some matches and headed up the road.

Several miles later, I remembered the jaguars, which reminded me of the mountain lions, which reminded me of the bears that frequent the refuge. Oh my.

A jaguar was treed and photographed near Brown Canyon in recent years — a heartening sign. Some experts speculate that the rarely seen jaguars may have been living in the area all along — but only recently noticed. Of course, the jaguars have to coexist with mountain lions and black bears, which love oak woodlands.

Suddenly, I felt like a link in the food chain.

But I bravely reminded myself that I'm a tool-using animal, big-brained and all. So I picked up a hunk of sharp-edged quartz, figuring I could whack a mountain lion pretty hard on the head if we got to arguing dinner arrangements.

Of course, I saw no sign of lions, jaguars or bears.

I got my reward the next morning for enduring this "dangerous" trek, when I emerged onto the porch of the education center — a splendid two-story ranch house with a huge kitchen and a stone fireplace — to stare slack-jawed at Baboquivari Peak, draped in cloud drifts. Birds in the oaks and sycamores cheered the dawn. So I wandered for half a mile up the creek, bordered with purple morning glories sparkling with morning dew.

Then I hurried back to the refuge headquarters, determined to see both pronghorns and masked bobwhite quail — two reasons we relented from a century of destroying the grasslands that once covered much of southeast Arizona.

Back at headquarters, I found Dykinga lounging triumphantly, having taken a dawn shot of heavenly light rays slanting down through the clouds to illuminate the pond's surface.

I explained about the locked gate and the rock and the lions and jaguars and bears. Shifflett explained the keypad was on the backside of the other post.

Dykinga, recently back from photographing grizzlies in Alaska, just smiled.

"So what were you gonna do with the rock?" he asked politely. "Knock yourself out?"

Shifflett found this very funny.

Once they quit laughing, I figured it was time to get going if I hoped to catch sight of a pronghorn — not to mention a bobwhite. But I really just wanted to explore this last, best patch of Sonoran grasslands, a refuge for the pronghorns, four types of quail and a species count that includes more than 500 birds, 58 mammals, 42 reptiles, 11 amphibians and more than 600 plants.

For the grassland revival, we can thank the masked bobwhite quail — once common, then lost, then rediscovered in the dwindling Sonoran grasslands in Mexico. The bobwhite, a droll flurry of brick-red feathers in the waving fields of poppies and grass, still struggles — but

in trying to save the bird, we recovered the grassland.

The refuge draws a modest 35,000 visitors a year, mostly day-trippers and bird-watchers from Tucson. The spring-fed cienega near the historic, quirky town of Arivaca remains the most-visited site on the refuge, a birders' wonderland of marshes and cottonwoods, with a meandering boardwalk offering glimpses of a large variety of birds — including the rare yellow-billed cuckoo. Many visitors wander across the grasslands in hopes of seeing a pronghorn, which the Apaches called the "One Who Is Becoming" because its ghostlike face and unearthly speed made it seem part spirit, part animal.

The refuge runs northerly about 24 miles from the Mexican border through the Altar Valley along State Route 286, an area where giant ground sloths, camels, huge bison, horses, beavers, mammoths and saber-toothed tigers wandered during the last Ice Age. Prehistoric hunters, and later the Hohokam, left traces in the valley. Apaches arrived in the 1500s and 1600s to hunt pronghorns, driving the farming-based Tohono O'odham back toward the Baboquivari Mountains.

The number of cattle in the southeast Arizona grasslands rose from perhaps 5,000 in 1870 to 1.5 million in 1890. Periodic droughts prompted the starving cattle to eat everything in sight, dramatically altering the grasslands. Droughts in the 1890s, 1920s and 1950s left piles of cattle bones and converted most of the rolling grasslands into mesquite-dominated desert. Instead of nourishing fields of grass across the Altar Valley, storm runoff scoured out a 20-foot-deep, 1,400-foot-wide, 40-mile long arroyo down the middle of the Altar Valley.

The exclusion of cattle and the lack of grassfire suppression in the past 18 years have dramatically increased native grasses in the refuge, slowed erosion and boosted numbers of key plant and animal species. However, efforts to bring back both pronghorns and bobwhite quail demonstrate the difficulty of rebuilding populations of declining species.

The Buenos Aires refuge remains the only place in North America where you can find four quail species — Gambel's, scaled, Montezuma and masked bobwhite. The masked bobwhite depends most heavily on thick, continuous grasslands for its survival, perhaps because it eats smaller seeds, feeds its young exclusively on summer grasshoppers and relies on camouflage protection in the deep grass when threatened.

Despite the return of the grassland, the reintroduced bobwhites still struggle because they lack survival skills. Surviving in a world of sudden storms, sporadic freezes, intermittent droughts, hungry coyotes, patrolling hawks and slithering snakes requires training by attentive parents. The refuge's bobwhite breeding facility has released 22,000 captive-bred birds into

[TOP] On the refuge, Arivaca Creek and the trees along its banks, such as an old-growth cottonwood (above, with Refuge Manager Wayne Shifflett) attract a variety of birds, including tropical kingbirds, nesting gray hawks, ferruginous pygmy-owls, rose-throated becards, vermilion flycatchers and yellow-billed cuckoos.
[RIGHT] Bees pollinate velvet mesquite trees' yellow flowers, which will ripen into seed pods and serve as food for coyotes and other desert animals.

[OPPOSITE PAGE] Deer and rodents feed on the yellow fruit that form from barrel cacti's flowers.
[LEFT] The rare yellow-billed cuckoo is just one of many birds visitors may spot at the refuge. TOM VEZO

the wild. However, the bobwhite population hovers at 200 to 300 and has been dwindling in the face of ongoing drought, probably because the young birds don't have wary, wild-reared parents. Quail captured in Mexico and released on the refuge fare better, but overgrazing and drought in Mexico have nearly wiped out the wild populations there, making it hard to find wild birds to transplant.

Efforts to reintroduce pronghorns also have struggled. Ice Age survivors, pronghorns rely on binocular vision and spectacular speed for safety. With the largest eyes proportionately of any mammal — equivalent to 8-power binoculars with nearly a 360-degree field of vision — they can spot a human or predator sneaking up from 4 miles away. They can run for long distances at 40 miles per hour and sprint at 70 miles per hour — taking 27-foot-long strides to land on exquisitely evolved pads of cartilage in their feet.

Pronghorns burn oxygen three times as fast as most animals, thanks to a huge heart and a windpipe more than twice as big as a human's. Although they resemble African antelope, they're actually in their own scientific family — with unique pronged horns that shed their sheathes each year.

The animals thrived for 40 million years before Europeans arrived in North America. But long-range rifles enabled hunters to slaughter them by the wagonload; at one point, four pronghorns sold for a mere quarter.

A North American pronghorn population estimated in the tens of millions plunged to 30,000 by 1920 — and to 650 in Arizona. Thanks to conservation efforts, about a million pronghorns now wander the nation's grasslands — including a herd of about 60 at Buenos Aires. Patient refuge visitors can usually glimpse a small herd by taking the 12-mile Antelope Drive, which starts near the visitors center and ends just north of Sasabe. Biologists are uncertain why the herd hasn't grown much in recent years.

During my visit, spotting the pronghorn herd or the bobwhite quail coveys proved as tough as locating the keypad on the gatepost. So I returned to Antelope Drive, paying special attention to the patches of wickedly thorned acacia that the quail favor. Overhead, the monsoon gathered for an afternoon assault. I spied a flutter in a patch of acacia. As I rolled to a stop, a quail exploded from the bush — flying low over the windswept grass. He might have had a bobwhite's reddish tinge and a dark head, but he might have been a scaled quail. So I hopped out of the car and followed him toward the crest of a long hill.

I moved through the grass, through the poppies, through the morning glories, stirring rustles of grasshoppers at every step. The approaching black monsoon cloud dropped to the horizon ahead, although I was in brilliant sun. Then the haunting song of a horned lark transfixed me. Baboquivari Peak dominated the far horizon, concealing the jaguars and mountain lions of my imagination. In that moment, in the line of the mountain, the approach of the storm, the waver of the grass, the call of the lark — I understood why the Creator lived here.

Continuing toward the hidden quail, I came to the hill's crest. Perhaps 100 yards away, I saw six pronghorns. The big-horned male lifted his ghostly face to study me. I froze, my heart brimming, ruffled by the wind. One of the youngsters bolted and the male raced after him, with his impossible 27-foot strides — as One Who Is Becoming the wind, the storm, the grass, the sun. The other females trotted after them.

I watched them disappear over the hill, into the storm, into the jags of lightning now threading through the blackness.

Somewhere in the waving grass, the bobwhite crouched, frozen, invisible, as I stood frozen, watching the storm bear down.

It did not matter any more whether I saw him, so long as I knew he was there, somewhere, blended with the grass. It was enough that he had given me the great gift of that single moment, as he had given us all this sacred place, on the edge of the storm. AH

Peter Aleshire of Phoenix says that although spring and winter are the most popular seasons for visiting Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, he loves best to go in August when the monsoons sweep through Altar Valley and swirl around Baboquivari Peak.

For Tucson-based photographer Jack Dykinga, this was a return visit to the refuge. Over the years, he's climbed Baboquivari Peak dozens of times. The explosion of summer poppies during this trip was something he's never seen before.

when you go

LOCATION: Approximately 170 miles southwest of Phoenix.
GETTING THERE: From Phoenix, drive south on Interstate 10 through Tucson to State Route 86, or Ajo Way. Go west to Three Points, then south on State Route 286 for 38 miles to refuge headquarters. Information and trails are located near Arivaca and can be reached by taking Interstate 19 south from Tucson to the Amado/Arivaca exits. Exit west, turn right at the T, and then left onto Arivaca Road. Proceed west for 20 miles to Arivaca. Refuge trails are located both east and west of town.
WEATHER: March average high, 69.7°; average low, 40.2°.
HOURS: Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, 7:30 A.M. to 4 P.M., every day; Arivaca information station, 8 A.M. to 7 P.M., as volunteers are available.
EVENT: Centennial celebration of the wildlife refuge system, March 15, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.; guided tours, displays, speaker and art show, bluegrass music. For tours, call (520) 823-4251.
TRAVEL ADVISORY: Refuge roads are always open. Please close gates behind you.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, (520) 823–4251.

Phoenix's Desert Botanical Garden

bloomin' with butterflies

Text by LORI K. BAKER
Photographs by DAVID H. SMITH

What looks like a showy orange flower dangling from a shrub suddenly soars into the air. Like a reckless hang glider, it zigzags past spectators, then flies aloft, nearly skimming the tops of their heads. With its brilliant pumpkin orange 3-inch wingspan outstretched to glide, the flying "flower" at last reveals its true identity: a Julia butterfly from the woodlands of southern Texas and Florida.

At the Desert Botanical Garden's Butterfly Pavilion in Phoenix, the Julia adds its bright hue to nearly a thousand lepidoptera decked out in almost all colors of the rainbow. In a mesh-enclosed habitat festooned with exotic greenery, cooling mist systems and ponds afloat with lily pads, butterflies soar, court, bask in the sun or sip flower nectar.

Some, like the low-flying zebra longwing, Florida's state butterfly with striking yellow stripes on black, entertain like circus performers. They often light on children's outstretched hands or heads. Laughing in delight, a 6-year-old boy exclaimed, "I've been here three times, and the same zebra keeps landing on me. He must really like me!"

Even 6-year-olds can master the art of butterfly attraction: Wear a colorful shirt, and a butterfly might mistake you for a flowered shrub. Dab on anything with a sweet fragrance, and you're butterfly bait. One man briefly wore a giant swallowtail emblazoned across his balding forehead, all because his few wisps of hair were pasted in place with an alluringly fragranced hair gel.

Serendipitous encounters with butterflies add fun and adventure to the Desert Botanical Garden — spanning 145 acres, 47 of which are open for exploration — and it's abloom in dazzling color during the spring. At the entrance, brilliant yellow-flowered orchid vines intertwine the rusted entry arbor dome, and paloverde trees line the path. Fairy duster bushes and their fuzzy bright red flowers buzz with bees, and African aloe plants spiked with reddish-orange blooms beckon hummingbirds. Amid stately centuries-old saguaros, it's the "youngsters" who steal the show on the Harriet K. Maxwell Desert Wildflower Trail: desert marigolds, poppies, bluebells and zinnias. They line a 2-acre interpretive loop walk showcasing blossoms from the four North American deserts, with an emphasis on the local Sonoran Desert.

Still, nothing can top the magic and charm of the Butterfly Pavilion, now in its second season and running from March 15 to May 11. It's one of a growing number of butterfly houses springing up across the United States. Butterfly World at Coconut Creek, Florida, opened in 1988, and at least a dozen others followed, including the Cecil B. Day Butterfly Center at Georgia's Callaway Gardens; the Cockrell Butterfly Center in Houston and the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House in Chesterfield, Missouri.

The centers grant seldom-seen glimpses of dazzling creatures becoming increasingly rare, endangered or even extinct through

[ABOVE] A giant swallowtail hangs on a wildflower inside the Butterfly Pavilion at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. [RIGHT] A zebra longwing allows a close-up view for a curious visitor to the Butterfly Pavilion.

[LEFT] An aloe bed in full bloom adorns the Desert Discovery Trail at the Desert Botanical Garden. [ABOVE] A variety of chrysalides, butterfly cocoons, hang glued to glass shelves inside the emergence chamber.

widespread pesticide use and natural habitat destruction. "Visitors often reminisce about how they'd seen fields of butterflies when growing up, but no longer," said Elaine McGinn, Desert Botanical Garden's director of exhibits

Visitors can spot many indigenous Arizona species among the ranks at the pavilion. One afternoon, a giant swallowtail fanned its distinctive two-toned wings — brownish-black and yellow-spotted above, cream-colored below — and sipped nectar from a golden columbine flower. Rich mahogany brown, white-spotted queens fluttered by, patrolling the airspace in search of mates. Nearby, brilliant yellow cloudless sulphurs "puddled" — gathered around wet mud — sipping nutrients through their long, coiled tubes called proboscises.

Meanwhile, queens and look-alike viceroys, both with lacy orange and black patterning, basked on rocks with their wings outstretched. Butterflies from other regions — zebra longwings, malachites and white peacocks — flitted among purple trailing lantanas, firecracker penstemons and blackfoot daisies. As afternoon edged to sunset, butterfly bedtime, several clung to the mesh enclosure and closed their wings to roost, the butterfly's version of sleep, until midmorning.

At the pavilion exit, signs warned of "hitchhikers" that might still be along for the ride. Garden volunteers checked visitors' clothing on the way out, to ensure there were no escapees.

Outside, children and adults stood transfixed in front of the glass-enclosed emergence chamber, waiting expectantly to see the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly. Here chrysalides, or butterfly cocoons, dangle from glass shelves like earrings at a jewelry store counter.

Inside the chamber, butterfly consultant Ann Taylor dotted a shelf's underside with a hot glue gun and attached another chrysalis. In their natural habitat, caterpillars find a safe location to pupate (change into a chrysalis). Using silk produced by silk glands, they spin a self-enclosing mat and attach themselves to plants with silken threads. "We're just replacing the silk that would be there naturally with a little bit of glue," she said, repeating the process until nearly 50 chrysalides were hung.

The chrysalides arrive twice a week via overnight delivery. They're shipped by breeders such as The Butterfly Farmers, located on a 5-acre spread near Fort Myers, Florida, where 5,000 to 6,000 caterpillars munch their way through foliage and flowers each day until they bloat to maximum size, shed their last larval skin and morph into chrysalides. Then they're ready for shipping to zoos and botanical gardens.

Breeders carefully line up the precious cargo in rows between cotton batting like newborn babes in a nursery. They enclose a newspaper-wrapped cold pack, the kind kids use in their lunchboxes, to keep the box a chilly 40 degrees. Such cold temperatures are like chrysalis cryonics — the butterflies don't spring to life again until temperatures warm up. Every box contains between three and 10 different species — each with distinctive chrysalides — depending on availability.

Taylor picked up a chrysalis that looked like Egyptian jade adorned with a band of golden specks. "This is absolutely jewel-like. Wouldn't you love to have a pair of earrings like this?" she said."It's a miraculous metamorphosis, that this chrysalis will become a butterfly with a 3-inch wingspan. It's hard to believe that inside are all the things necessary to create a beautiful butterfly."

With patience and good timing, visitors can witness an adult butterfly drowsily breaking out of its pupa shell. It emerges with small, shriveled wings and an oversized body. It quickly pumps fluid into the veins of its wings, which expand like an inflatable life raft. Within about a half-hour, its exoskeleton hardens and the wings become rigid. As many as 30 take this bold step into butterflyhood in a day; "sometimes they pop like popcorn," McGinn said.

The Desert Botanical Garden prefers to hatch butterflies from the pupa stage. "They are healthier and live longer that way," McGinn said.

Still, even the longest-lived butterflies spend ephemeral lives among the flowers; most last no more than two weeks. To keep the Butterfly Pavilion well populated, the garden also receives overnight deliveries of about 400 live butterflies every two weeks from butterfly farmers. Like the shipments of chrysalides, the boxes are cold-packed to keep the butterflies dormant. Inside, small glassine envelopes each hold a butterfly, its wings closed and perfectly still.

One Friday afternoon, McGinn brought two boxes to the pavilion, where she handed visitors envelopes to open and free the butterflies that had warmed up and were ready to fly. A vacationing retired couple from Minnesota laughed as white-speckled queens soared out as soon as they opened the envelopes. Meanwhile, Julias lazily perched on their hands and arms like dreamers reluctant to wake up. "This is the highlight of our trip to Arizona," the woman told McGinn with a broad grin.

This up-close-and-personal interaction with butterflies represents just part of what the garden has to offer. Visitors also attend classes on butterfly gardening and entomologist-led talks on butterflies and moths. To attract butterflies in their own gardens, they can buy flowering shrubs at the annual spring and fall plant sales.

Inspired by the wonder and fascination for these fragile insects, many people reflect for the first time on ecological concerns, such as changing their use of pesticides and supplementing lost habitats with their own landscaping. "We create an environment that makes people stop and think," said McGinn. "By coming to the exhibit, visitors will hopefully realize there's a delicate balance between plants, wildlife and people."

Beyond the spacious 36-by-80-foot sanctuary for butterflies, the rest of the gardens recently underwent its own dramatic $17-million metamorphosis.

At the garden's gateway, a hogan-shaped ramada with a rusted woven-metal roof shades a bubbling fountain and concrete benches. The entrance path, lined with bunch grasses rippling in the breeze, leads to a monumental spiraling agave terrace made of stone and filled with century plants. Underneath the shady canopy of the new Steele Entry Plaza, benches and a drinking fountain lure visitors to stop and linger amid a mix of smooth desert spoons, round golden barrel cacti, branching cholla cacti and knobby totem pole cacti.

[ABOVE] The specialized garden inside the Butterfly Pavilion provides an ideal habitat for butterflies, and the folks watching the butterflies seem to like it, too.

Inside the garden, the new Boppart Courtyard, dappled with shade from paloverde trees and creosote bushes, borders the Desert Studies Center's four new buildings: the Nina Pulliam Research and Horticulture Center, which houses a new library, herbarium and two laboratories; the William J. and Barbara B. Weisz Learning Center with large outdoor and indoor classroom space; Dorrance Hall, an elegant reception hall flanked by a patio and gallery; and the Marley Education & Volunteer Building. An exit path winds past the sunken spiral garden filled with agaves, desert spoons, desert milkweed and swaying deer grasses. Near the exit, plants and garden-themed gifts stock the new garden shop.

Amid all the new, old favorites remain in the Desert Botanical Garden, which opened in 1939 to exhibit, conserve and showcase arid-land plants of the world. Today it houses the world's largest and most diverse collection of succulent plants in an outdoor setting. Many can be seen from the one-third-mile Desert Discovery Trail, which winds past some of the garden's oldest plantings, including an old man cactus, *Cephalocereus senilis*, whose wispy spines look like a white beard; saguaro "hotels" housing starlings and finches living in holes originally carved by woodpeckers; and mesquite trees, whose trunks glisten with inky sap that Indian artists once used for paint.

During the spring, the wildflower trail loops through a wash of colors — yellow brittlebush, blushingly pink penstemons and blue desert lupines — that reveal the beauty and diversity of North American desert wildflowers. The meandering trail leads past separate gardens in natural settings: a boulder outcropping, desert floor and shady streamside habitat. An open-air pavilion provides an idyllic resting spot with a view of the surrounding Papago Park's red buttes and rolling hills just outside the garden.

Even an arid Sonoran Desert spring presents a bounty of blossoms, whether as wildflowers dotting the landscape like dabs of an artist's brilliant paints or a floating bouquet of butterflies flitting through the crisp air — a reminder of the annual renewal of life. AH

After Lori K. Baker of Mesa learned about the plight of butterflies caused by widespread pesticide use, she began buying only organic produce.

The journey that butterflies take on their way to release in the pavilion fascinates David H. Smith of Phoenix. He enjoyed watching children's faces as they discovered the world of butterflies.

Careful hands open a glassine envelope that protects the cold and dormant butterfly during shipping.

Warmed up and ready to fly, a zebra longwing wastes no time in fluttering away.

Visitors get to participate in the release of butterflies from the envelopes in which they are shipped.

when you go

LOCATION: The Desert Botanical Garden is in east Phoenix's Papago Park at 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, about a half-mile north of the Phoenix Zoo.
HOURS, DATES: Open daily; October to April, 8 A.M. to 8 P.M.; May to September, 7 A.M. to 8 P.M. Closed December 25 and July 4.
FEES: $7.50, adults; $3.50, ages 5 to 12.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Desert Botanical Garden, (480) 941-1225 or www.dbg.org.

BUTTERFLY SILENT, BUTTERFLY BEAUTIFUL

and other Indian myths

According to Tohono O'odham Indian stories, the Creator sat one bright summer day under a pine tree watching a group of laughing children at play. A brown pup romped through a riot of wildflowers. The sun blazed in a blue sky dotted with wispy, white clouds. A songbird landed in the branches overhead, loosing a shower of pine needles.

The Creator watched the play of shadow and sunlight and falling yellow leaves fluttering here and there in the late summer breeze, and as he watched these things, he grew sad.

Soon these children will grow old, he thought. *And that puppy will become a tired, mangy dog. And the flowers will die and snow will cover the land.*

The Creator became so sad at these thoughts that he vowed to preserve the afternoon for the months ahead. "All these colors should be caught forever," he said to the songbird that watched him from overhead. "I will make something to gladden my heart, something for these children to enjoy."

He took out his magic bag, and in it he put the black from a laughing girl's hair, the brown of the pup's floppy ears, the yellow of the fluttering leaves, a bit of blue sky and a touch of white from a passing cloud. He added green from the pine tree and the orange, purple and red from the flowers. Overhead, the songbird sang her merry tune, and with a smile, the Creator tossed a bit of her melody into the mix.

Brimming with happiness, he walked to the children and offered them the bulging sack. The girl with black hair opened the magic bag, and out flew thousands of butterflies in every color ever created. Enchanted, the girl said she had never seen anything so beautiful. The other children agreed, and the Creator was glad.

The children danced with joy under the quivering wings of these new, fanciful creatures. Then one with wings the color of a summer sky landed on the Creator's head and began to sing a beautiful song. The other butterflies joined in, and the children stopped to listen to the chirping melody.

The songbird flew down to perch on the Creator's shoulder. "When you created the birds, you gave us each our own song. Now you have passed mine around to these new playthings of yours," she scolded. "Isn't it enough that they have all of the colors of the rainbow?"

The Creator thought a moment and said, "You are right. I should not have taken what was yours."

And he took away the song from the butterflies, which continued to dance over the children's heads.

"They are beautiful even so," the Creator said.

And that is why butterflies are silent today.

TEXT BY CARRIE M. MINER ILLUSTRATIONS BY DUGALD STERMER

THE DELIGHTFUL TOHONO O'odham version of the creation of butterflies is one of myriad butterfly tales told throughout the Southwest and beyond. The butterfly has symbolized the human soul since antiquity. Ancient Greeks called them *psyche* — meaning "the soul."

Of course, butterflies actually flitted onto the scene long before people started making up myths to account for them. Butterflies emerged about 35 million years ago. Today, there are nearly 17,500 known species of butterflies in the world ranging in size from the Queen Alexandria's birdwing, with a wingspan of 11 inches, to the diminutive Western pygmy blue, which spreads out to less than a half-inch.

Butterflies live on nearly every part of the globe, except Antarctica and the oceans. They grace flowery fields, stream banks, deserts, hillsides, meadows, forest glades and alpine tundra. They play a crucial role in the ecosystem as pollinators and in the human imagination as symbols of creativity, rebirth and joy.

More than 300 species of butterflies — 45 percent of the total found in the United States — live in Arizona. The Tohono O'odham people, once known as the Papagos, focused on the sheer beauty of these insects, as some 240 species inhabit their southern Arizona homeland. The highest concentration of species in Arizona resides in the southeastern portion of the state — in Santa Cruz, Cochise and Pima counties. With biological links to the Sierra Madre Occidental range and the tropics in Mexico, this region's varied plant-life and climate account for its richly diverse butterfly population. The Yaqui people, another Southwestern desert tribe, believe butterflies portend the coming of rain. When they spot approaching butterflies, Yaquis throw white corn kernels or dried leaves in the air and sing a rain song.

White butterflies, they say,
in a row are flying.
Over there, I, where the flower-covered
sun comes out,
they are emerging,
all through the wilderness world,
in a row they are flying.
White butterflies, they say,
in a row are flying.

The best time to seek butterflies in the Southwest is in the rainy season between July and September, when the adults breed.

Chances of finding butterflies increase in areas where two habitats overlap. Some of the best, easily accessible butterfly-watching spots include Sabino Canyon in the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson, Madera and Florida canyons in the Santa Rita Mountains south of Tucson, and Ramsey and Garden canyons in the diverse Huachuca range near Sierra Vista.

In eastern Arizona, the Chemehuevi Indians, also known as the Southern Paiutes, often use stylized butterfly motifs in the designs of their highly prized baskets.

The Hopis of northern Arizona often use butterfly symbols. Ancient Hopi pottery shows this affinity, as do the three Hopi kachinas with butterfly origins — Poli Sio Hemis Kachina (Zuni Hemis Butterfly Kachina), Poli Taka (Butterfly Man) and Poli Mana (Butterfly Girl).

The Aztecs of Mexico portrayed the butterfly with a menacing aspect. They represented their goddess Itzpapalotl (Obsidian Butterfly) as a strong and ferocious being with butterfly wings and large claws on her hands and feet.

Several Arizona Indian cultures drew similar, disquieting morals from the butterfly's seemingly demented zigzagging flight. The Zuni sacred butterfly is believed to make people crazy, especially young girls who will follow the yellow butterfly wherever it may lead. This belief is similar to the story of the Apache Bear Dance, in which butterflies entice girls into the underworld. The Tewas also warn against the temptation represented by this colorful insect in a tale of a girl ignoring her work to follow a beautiful butterfly up a mountain. On reaching the top, the butterfly turns into a wicked boy, who then tosses the girl down to her death.

The Navajos use the symbolism of butterflies to warn against vanity, temptation and foolishness in the story of "The Two Maidens and the White Butterfly," from *Navajo Indian Myths*, by Aileen O'Bryan, Dover Publications, New York, 1993. When the hero of the tale catches the wicked White Butterfly, he splits open the enemy's head with an ax, and thousands of butterflies escape from the mortal wound. The wise hero pulls one of the butterflies out of the air and insists that it tell the others they can no longer enter the brain of man.

"You will be of little use to the people," he says in the story. "Only when they catch you and put your pollen on their legs and arms and say, 'May I run swiftly, may my days be long, may I be strong in arm.'"

In the spring, Apaches sing a sorrowful song of the Flower Maiden, which details the creation of the butterfly. Their story follows.

FROM MAIDEN TO BUTTERFLY, IN SEARCH OF LOVE

In the first days of the people, many warriors sought the favor of the beautiful Flower Maiden. But of them all, she loved only two — Hidden Love and Iron Courage. They each contended for her love, but not even the Sky Father could help her make the choice. Then fate stepped in, and both warriors were called to a great battle against invaders coming from the north. Flower Maiden bid them each goodbye with a heavy heart. Many months passed as she waited for her warriors to return, but when the war party rode back into camp, neither of her loved ones returned with the victorious.

Flower Maiden, who had lost any chance of happiness, took her tears and set out to find the bodies of the warriors she still loved even in death. She searched the hills and plains for years, grieving deeply. When she could find neither of her beloved warriors, she pleaded with the Sky Father. "Please help me find their resting place," she cried. "Please help me find their lost souls."

"It was not my wish that your promised ones should die," said the Sky Father. "But with them I also touched many others and in sorrow, I covered all of their bloodied bodies with soil and grass."

Flower Maiden lamented, "Then I shall never find them."

Her sorrow so grieved the Sky Father that he ordered the ground to yield flowers in the colors and patterns of each fallen warrior's shield to aid Flower Maiden in her lonely search. And when he realized she could not find the battlefield on which her beloved warriors had died in a single lifetime, he turned her into a beautiful butterfly so that each spring her spirit could wander among the flowers in search of her loved ones. And perhaps one day she will find them. AH

As a child, Glendale resident Carrie Miner loved to sit still and watch butterflies skipping along, and even now she claims them as her favorite insect.

Dugald Stermer of San Francisco found that using colored pencils on black watercolor paper was the perfect medium to connect his artistic style with the intrinsic delicate beauty of butterflies.

[ABOVE] Sunshine, hot dogs and a leisurely afternoon at the ballpark — like this scene from last year's game at Tucson Electric Park between the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Anaheim Angels— mean spring training is back for another season. KERRICK JAMES BASEBALL BY JIM MARSHALL

PLAY BALL!

By Jeb J. Rosebrook

FANS WHO LOVE SPRING TRAINING FIND BLISS IN ARIZONA

AH, SPRINGTIME — TIME FOR BASEBALL IN ARIZONA.

Hot dogs, peanuts, cold drinks and emerald-green grass. Sunshine on a cloudless, warm Arizona afternoon, a lucky-day bargain outfield seat for $1. Bustling shops stocked with team ball caps, T-shirts and autographed bats, jewelry vendors and automobile raffles, then silence and reverence as our national anthem is played, and the joy of young and old voices singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."

Friends are with friends and strangers become friends, a time when we discover and

rediscover baseball in Arizona. It's spring 2002, and the Boys of Spring are trying to become the Boys of Summer.

"Spring training in Florida is fine," writes political columnist and baseball author George Will in *Newsweek* magazine, "but in Arizona it is bliss." Springtime fans dream that this will be the year their team will win a division, win a pennant, reach the World Series, clinch the championship.

"Which way to the ballpark?" a young couple in tank tops and shorts, driving a rented top-down convertible, ask a passerby on a Scottsdale street. They have pale northern California skin — but not for long.

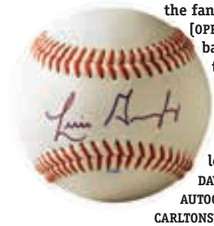
Under brilliant sunshine, they're about to share their excitement and anticipation of baseball like the nearly 1 million fans who will watch spring training in Arizona's Cactus League, the 10 major league teams holding spring training in the Grand Canyon State. Northern California fans, like the couple asking directions, come to see Barry Bonds and the San Francisco Giants, who will open their spring training season before a capacity crowd of more than 11,000 fans at Scottsdale Stadium.

Enthusiastic crowds will greet the Anaheim Angels in Tempe Diablo Stadium, the Milwaukee Brewers at Maryvale Baseball Park, the Oakland Athletics at Phoenix's Municipal Stadium, and the Seattle Mariners and San Diego Padres at the Peoria Sports Complex. The Chicago Cubs, whose seasonal return to Arizona has been a baseball ritual for more than 50 years, will bring sellout crowds of more than 12,000 to HoHoKam Park in Mesa.

In Tucson, the Colorado Rockies train and play at the Old Pueblo's venerable Hi Corbett Field, while the Chicago White Sox and Arizona Diamondbacks occupy the more modern confines of 5-year-old Tucson Electric Park.

"This is our first year for spring training," retirees from Santa Rosa, California, tell those who share their picnic table prior to a Giants-Diamondbacks game in Scottsdale. They choose burritos over hot dogs. "A friend buys up the entire home schedule, then sells off

[OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE] Steve Finley, center fielder for the 2001 world champion Diamondbacks, takes time to build rapport with the fans. KERRICK JAMES

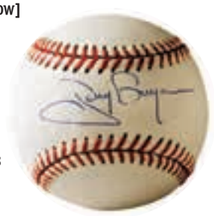


[OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW] For a baseball fan, what's better than an autographed ball? KEN ROSS

[ABOVE] Chicago Cubs 2002 batboy Ryan Baughman plays major leaguer for the camera. DAVID ZICKL

AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALLS BY CARLTONS' PHOTOGRAPHIC INC.

[ABOVE] Delino DeShields of the Chicago Cubs awaits his turn in the batting cage. DAVID ZICKL
[OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE] The Diamondbacks' Craig Counsell limbers up before a spring game. KERRICK JAMES
[OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW] National League batting champion Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants emerges from a slide after stealing second base. KERRICK JAMES



a week of games to friends, keeping one for himself. That way, we all get a week here."

Neither has been to a game at the Giants' new Pacific Bell Park in San Francisco, but as for spring training in Arizona, they're sold on it. "We love it. We'll be back next year."

"We're originally from Portland," a Seattle Mariners fan chimes in. "We retired here." He hopes this is the year the Mariners will take themselves to the World Series.

Over at Phoenix's Municipal Stadium, the Oakland A's have their minds on the same goal. On a warm, sunny day, as the A's take on the Milwaukee Brewers, a family's three generations sit together. A mother holds her youngest, a protective blanket shielding the baby from the sun. By the third inning, a young man and woman take the seats next to them, introducing themselves as visiting from Denver and Cleveland. They've made Arizona their spring baseball destination, not to follow one team but to enjoy all the teams. "We wanted to go to the Cubs game in Mesa, but it was sold out, so we came here," they say.

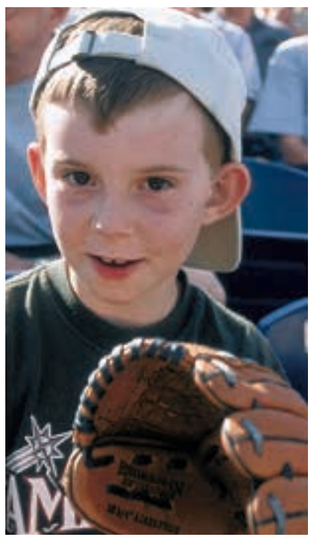
Nearby, a fan drops an easy catch of a foul ball. "Error!" kids someone from the crowd.

In Scottsdale, four young men, who plan their annual reunion around baseball spring training, talk up two attractive women. "He's from Atlanta, they're from Charlotte, I'm from Pittsburgh," one says. "We usually go to Florida. This year we decided to come to Arizona." At the moment, it seems incidental that the Giants are playing the Arizona Diamondbacks.

During spring training games, fans exchange their stories and dreams of their youth. In Tucson, a man, shirtless in the sun, watches his White Sox struggle against the Angels, recalling, "I danced on top of the dugout with the Sox mascot at the old Comiskey Park."

A week earlier, in Maryvale, a retired banker recounted his dream of becoming a big leaguer. "One day when I was 12, my sister asked me if I still had that dream. I said, 'Yes. Why do you ask?' 'Because,' she told me, 'you aren't any good.'" In the background, the public address announcer takes time between innings to inform 7,081 spectators, "We're due for a sunny high of 71 today. In Milwaukee, the temperature is 41."

Spring training is a time when every boy or girl dreams of going home with a major-league



ball as a keepsake. Gloves on small hands poise hopefully to catch a foul ball. When the umpire behind third base at Tucson's Electric Park scoops up a foul, young fans plead for him to throw the ball in their direction. The ump smiles and tells them to "Sit!" They do. He walks to the stands and gently hands the ball to the youngest child.

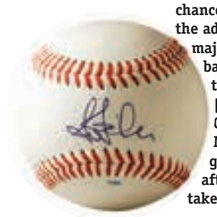
When it comes to the Chicago Cubs, the fans' love and loyalty have no limits. On a day when the temperature unseasonably rises into the low 90s, the Cubs take on the San Diego Padres at HoHoKam Park. About 12,500 fans chant "Sammmyyyyy" each time Sammy Sosa comes to the plate. Perennial fan Ronnie "Woo Woo" Wickers, in his Cubs uniform, walks around the park as he has done every spring since 1969, cheering on Cubs fans. In unison, they chant back, "Woo Woo!"

When Sosa flies out, a fan remarks, "His [long] fly ball outs are better to watch than most guys' hits." When the Padres stage a four-run rally to come within one run of the Cubs, the crowd becomes quiet. Is this the way it will be — again — this year? Perhaps. Yet the Cubs hang on to win 10-9.

Ballpark scenes become baseball memories forever, as if in a Norman Rockwell painting. In Tucson, groundskeepers carefully water down the infield. During pregame warm-up, a catcher pauses to chat with a friend in the stands. Players stretch and run in the outfield, while others patiently sign autographs. Coaches, who never run, saunter among their stretching players as a recorded Garth Brooks sings "The Dream" over the public address system. After the national anthem, a youngster throws out the first pitch.

There is the unmistakable crack of the bat, the home-run swing. One by Sosa, over the 400-foot mark in Maryvale's right-center field, lands far up into the hillside lawn among sunbathing spectators. Marveling, one man tells another, "That may be the longest home run I've ever seen."

Close by, a mother holds her daughter on her lap, clasping and waving their hands



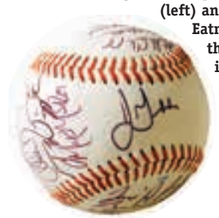
[OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE] Fans applaud a base hit in a Seattle Mariners and Milwaukee Brewers game at Maryvale Park in west Phoenix. JIM MARSHALL [OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW] The improved chance of catching a foul ball is one of the advantages of the smaller-than-major-league spring training ballparks, as Jard Jackson hopes to find out. CHRIS HOLFORD [ABOVE] Beer vendor Mark Carlson's job at HoHoKam Park in Mesa takes him out to the ball game on a sunny weekday afternoon, while most fans must take a day off from work. DAVID ZICKL

together. "Home run!" the mother tells the small girl, creating her first baseball memory. "Home run! Circle the bases! Circle the bases!"

A boy, perhaps 9 or 10, wearing a Giants T-shirt and cap and with glove in hand, chases morning shadows outside Scottsdale Stadium, where men and boys play catch, and parking lots fill while fans gather to barbecue beside a motor home. It's not quite 10:30 on a Saturday morning — still two and a half hours before game time.

No one wants to miss anything in this annual Arizona springtime baseball celebration. No fan wants it to end. AH

Jeb J. Rosebrook of Scottsdale saw his first spring training game in Phoenix in 1951, with a guy named DiMaggio in center field and a rookie named Mantle in right — a lasting baseball memory.



[OPPOSITE PAGE] The morning sun begins to awaken Scottsdale Stadium. KEN ROSS [ABOVE] HoHoKam Park groundskeepers Dick Vaske (left) and Samuel Eatman make sure the playing field is carpetlike. DAVID ZICKL

ANZA NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL BONDS ARIZONANS TO COLONISTS OF SAN FRANCISCO

TUMACACORI MISSION TO TUBAC

TEXT BY SAM NEGRI
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PATRICK FISCHER

[LEFT] Mesquite trees frame the remains of the 17th-century church at Tumacacori National Historical Park south of Tucson. Established in 1691, San Jose de Tumacacori is one of Arizona's oldest missions. [THIS PAGE] The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail meanders from Tumacacori to Tubac near the quiet flow of the Santa Cruz River.

On a steamy morning 214 years after the death of a legendary Spanish explorer, I set out to retrace his footsteps on the southern Arizona portion of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, named after him. The 4.5-mile route runs parallel to the Santa Cruz River between Tubac and Tumacacori, some 40 miles south of Tucson.

Rains have drenched the surrounding hills, and I find the trail this morning damp but not muddy, a ribbon of adobe brown that begins near some crude archaeological remnants at Tubac. The trail winds through a rich green meadow and over small embankments dotted with colorful daisies and desert paintbrush before arriving at Tumacacori National Historical Park. The complete national Anza trail spans some 1,200 miles, but Arizona's most notable and hikable segment stretches from Tubac to Tumacacori.

As I set out, I'm mindful that over the previous 30 years I've spent an unusually large amount of time tracking Anza's life from his death backward to his birth. It began the day I saw what was purported to be his skeleton on display in a church at Arizpe, Sonora, Mexico. I later learned that Anza was, indeed, buried in the church, but the displayed skeleton was some other Spanish colonial soldier. In subsequent years, I found myself at Fronteras, Sonora, where Anza was born, then at Tubac, where he was commander of the presidio. Years later, I visited Fort Point in San Francisco, near the entrance to the Golden Gate Bridge, where Anza ended his most important journey with the founding of San Francisco.

I pause on one of the trailside benches that volunteers have erected and reflect for a moment on this man that I have been following for so many years. I knew Anza had fought Apaches in the Tubac area, had written his dispassionate but thoughtful reports from a camp or a tent in this picturesque valley, and had delivered babies on his expedition from Tubac to San Francisco. His footprints are all over northern Mexico, southern Arizona, New Mexico and California, and yet, just like this trail under my feet, he is not well known. In Tucson, where I live, Anza is best known as the name of a drive-in movie theater.

In October 1775, Anza left Tubac with a large group of settlers and livestock, determined to reach the remote outpost of San Francisco and establish a Spanish colony there. That group arrived near today's Fort Point and formed the nucleus that eventually grew into the present metropolis. Anza had recruited the colonists from among the poor of Mexico and led them north through the tiny village of Tumacacori, long before there was a mission church there, and on to Tubac, where the final preparations were made before leaving for California. Tumacacori, a leafy oasis of mesquite and cottonwood trees, lies along the Santa Cruz River.

Most of the year, the nave of the mission remains hollow as a bell except for the visitors who stop at Tumacacori National Historical Park, created to protect remains of the mission church. During the summer, nothing much happens in this part of Arizona, some 20 miles north of the Mexican border. Then, in September, you can feel a distinct drop in the evening temperatures. Soon afterward, as the honeyed light of October arrives, the change becomes obvious and the clock seems to stop. The rustic tranquility that surrounds the place drops away and is replaced with a burst of song and a remarkable procession that commemorates Anza's historic expedition.

Tubac's Anza Days, a festive re-enactment, celebrates the start of Anza's journey. Tumacacori's barren mission church, though no longer affiliated with any religious order, comes alive with the echoes of a Mass sung partly in Spanish, English, Pima, the language of a local Indian tribe, and occasionally in Yaqui, the language of Indians from northern Mexico and Arizona. The priest and his congregation dress like 18th-century Spanish settlers.

Years ago, when the Anza National Historic Trail was dedicated by the National Park Service, I met one of these costumed participants, Donald Garate. He works as an interpretive specialist at Tumacacori National Historical Park. Like Anza, Garate is half Basque, and he sports a handlebar mustache that any colonial Spaniard might have found pretty dapper. In most of the historic re-enactments each October for the last 10 years, Garate has played the role of Anza, wearing an old-fashioned white shirt and a flat-topped black hat, a red sash tied around his waist and a blue cape draped over his shoulders. He carries a sword that he borrows from the Coronado Memorial and a leather scabbard he made to sheath it.

Resplendent in his costume on the morning of Tumacacori's multilingual Mass, Garate mounts his horse at the head of the line of "settlers" and "foot soldiers"

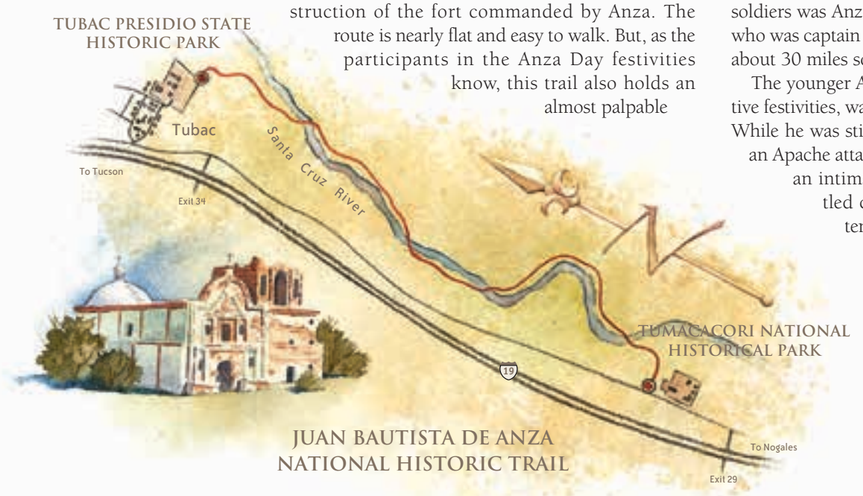
[BELOW] Groves of Arizona ash and mesquite shade the Anza Trail. [BELOW RIGHT] Markers ensure that hikers can easily follow the 4.5-mile trail.

[ABOVE] Shallow waters of the Santa Cruz River flow beneath canopies of cottonwood, willow and Arizona ash trees.

[ABOVE] From left to right, Marko Gallardo, Steve Soli and Don Garate wait next to Tumacacori before the ride to Tubac, kicking off the Anza Days celebration.

and clip-clops north to the Tubac Presidio, the actual final staging area for Anza's journey.

This section of the popular trail begins across the road from the Tumacacori post office, a stone's throw north of the mission. The trail, on an easement across private property, crisscrosses the Santa Cruz River over a series of small wooden bridges. During the summer months, floods sometimes wash out these bridges, but they're soon replaced or repaired. The trail meanders among shady cottonwood trees and across exposed fields to Tubac Presidio State Historic Park, a reconstruction of the fort commanded by Anza. The route is nearly flat and easy to walk. But, as the participants in the Anza Day festivities know, this trail also holds an almost palpable link to a time when Arizona was not yet a named place on any map.



KEVIN KIBSEY

The route's story begins with the arrival of Fernando Cortez in the heart of the Aztec empire, and his conquest of Tenochtitlan (present-day Mexico City) in 1521.

As the Spaniards pushed farther north, the more vulnerable they became to the harsh landscape and the violence of the native people. Eventually, to protect settlers and the missionaries who were proselytizing in this region, the Spaniards sent soldiers to establish a network of presidios, or forts. Among these soldiers was Anza's father, also named Juan Bautista, who was captain of the presidio at Fronteras, Sonora, about 30 miles south of today's Douglas, Arizona.

The younger Anza, portrayed in the commemorative festivities, was born at or near Fronteras in 1735. While he was still a toddler, his father was killed in an Apache attack. The younger Anza grew up with an intimate knowledge of the sparsely settled countryside, became an army lieutenant when he was 20 and was made commander of the San Ignacio Presidio at Tubac when he was 25. Seven years after he took command, Anza wrote a personal report that sheds some light on his activities:

"When I took over my present command in 1760, my section of the frontier was faced with an uprising of over a thousand Papagos [now known as the O'odham]. After launching various campaigns to subjugate them, I attacked them personally on May 10, 1760, and took the lives of Ciprian, their captain, and nine others. All of the others then capitulated. . . ."

The bloodshed did not bring him as much fame as the two expeditions he led that resulted in the founding of San Francisco. The first trip started in January 1774. Anza's party, including two priests, a California guide, a courier and 20 volunteer soldiers, left Tubac to seek an overland route to California through the harsh desert terrain that is now southern Arizona and northern Mexico.

In the 1770s, the Spaniards had five missions and two presidios scattered from Mexico to Monterey, but military and civilian settlement in California had stalled. The problem was one of supply. Everything needed at the missions near Los Angeles came by ship from the Mexican port of San Blas. The boats were small and the winds, which blew southward along the Pacific Coast, made the trip north difficult.

If an overland route could be found between the Tubac area and the California coast, the government reasoned they could steadily expand New Spain's northern frontier. Cattle, horses and agricultural products, readily available in Sonora, could be delivered to the new settlements more quickly by land than by sea.

Anza's first expedition to California did not include any civilian colonists. Francisco Tomas Garces, an adventurous traveler who was also the priest at Mission San Xavier del Bac north of Tubac, told Anza they could follow the Santa Cruz River north from Tubac to Tucson and northwest to its confluence with the Gila River. Then they could follow the Gila to the Colorado River and California.

Garate said that on the first expedition, Anza didn't take that route. Apaches had stolen most of his fresh horses at Tubac, so he and his soldiers set off to find replacements in Mexico's Altar Valley. They went south as far as Caborca without having much luck and then proceeded on their California trek, heading northwestward from Caborca and crossing what is now known as El Camino del Diablo ("devil's highway," so named for the hundreds of travelers who died along its waterless miles) to the Colorado River.

At the river, they encountered the Yuma Indians, whose help was essential in fording the wide and unpredictable stream. The party continued west to San Gabriel Mission, near present-day Los Angeles, then turned north to Monterey, near San Francisco.

Having established that it was possible to travel from Tubac to the San Francisco area on land, Anza returned to the confluence of the Gila and Colorado rivers. This time he avoided El Camino Diablo and took the shorter route east along the Gila River to the vicinity of present-day Gila Bend and then headed southeast to his presidio at Tubac, returning May 26, 1775.

Six months later, after a brief temporary assignment to a different presidio, Anza was summoned to Mexico City to report on his California expedition. Word of the success of his remarkable journey had preceded him, however, and before he arrived, Anza had already been promoted to lieutenant colonel.

[LEFT] On Sunday, the public is invited to attend the Anza Days Mass in the old church at Tumacacori National Historical Park.

The Spanish authorities were now eager for Anza to launch a second trip to California, this one with the colonists. Anza gathered the civilian volunteers in Culiacan, Sinaloa, gave them guns and new clothes, taught them how to shoot and led them all to Tubac, the final assembly area for the trip to California's Monterey Peninsula.

On October 23, 1775, they were ready to leave, including the chaplain, Pedro Font, a finicky friar who lamented the gap between his crude surroundings and the finer things of life. Font even brought along his harp and complained that Anza wouldn't let him play it as often as he would have liked. Authenticity being essential to any re-enactment, Garate one year recruited David Shaul, a visiting professor at the University of Arizona who plays the harp. Shaul, who normally dabbles in linguistics, dressed in a friar's frock and picked at the harp strings as he rode the trail. Shaul and a small group of musicians and singers now provide music for the Mass at Tumacacori Mission preceding the trek to Tubac.

Everyone in the parade stops in Tubac to enjoy the food and frolic that marks the town's annual Anza Days. The real procession departed Tubac in October and arrived in San Francisco in April 1776, happy to have merely survived. Understanding the compelling need for survival, I complete my unhurried walk down part of Anza's trail in about four hours and head for the first restaurant I can find. AH

Sam Negri of Tucson writes frequently about historic events along Arizona's sparsely populated border with Mexico. He also wrote "Along the Way" in this issue.

Tucsonan Patrick Fischer found that photographing the elaborately costumed Anza Days celebrants was like stepping back into the 18th century.

when you go

LOCATION: Approximately 160 miles south of Phoenix.

GETTING THERE: From Phoenix drive south on Interstate 10 to Interstate 19, then south on I-19 to Exit 34, for Tubac, or Exit 29 for Tumacacori.

DAYS/HOURS: Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is always open to hikers and is accessible from both locations. At Tumacacori, the trailhead is north of the mission at the park boundary. At Tubac, it is just south of the presidio park. Tumacacori National Historical Park and Tubac Presidio State Historic Park are open 8 A.M. to 5 P.M.; closed Christmas Day. Tubac Historic Park is open on Thanksgiving.

FEES: Tumacacori, $2 per individual or $4 per family; Tubac, $3, adults; $1, children 7-14.

EVENTS: Tubac's Anza Days re-enactment, October 12.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: Always carry plenty of water when hiking.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Tumacacori National Historical Park, (520) 398-2341, Tumacacori, www.nps.gov/tuma; Tubac Presidio State Historic Park, (520) 398-2252, Tubac, www.pr.state.az.us/parkhtml/tubac.

Living things **STIR ANEW** in a

petrifiedLAND

National park's wildlife flourishes in stony ancient forests

Petrified Forest National Park stands as a remarkable monument to the Triassic Period, when, 250 million years ago, ancestral reptiles emerged to become the kings of beasts. Preserving one of the world's largest and most accessible repositories of dinosaur bones and of giant trees that long ago turned to yellow, pink, purple and green stone, the mile-high park takes in arid, sparsely vegetated landscapes of weathered rock and multicolored sand, places well suited for a science-fiction film set on some distant planet — and that look as if dinosaurs could be at home among them even today.

Winter weather in the rugged northern Arizona area known as the Colorado Plateau can be as austere as the land. In that season, stiff winds, cold rains, snow flurries and temperatures in the 20s and below combine to keep rangers close to the fire and visitors few, while animals disappear from view, winging away to warmer wintering grounds or burrowing to comfortable hibernation underground.

Come spring, Petrified Forest takes on a much different aspect — for, though dedicated to the remnants of a remote past, it remains in every way a living park. Its forests, grasslands, desert plains and stream and river valleys shelter hundreds of plant, bird, mammal, reptile and insect species, some of them not often seen elsewhere. And all of those creatures and plants, it seems, greet the new season with exuberant growth and an extraordinary amount of hustle and bustle, making the park a prime destination for wildlife watchers and wildflower enthusiasts as well as dinosaur buffs.

A typical spring day at the 93,533-acre park dawns cool, reminding the visitor of winter's recent departure. As it climbs in the sky,

[ABOVE] Saltbush seedlings demonstrate their power to survive in the parched earth of the Petrified Forest National Park in northeastern Arizona. GEORGE H.H. HUEY [LEFT] Thriving throughout desert and mountain areas of Arizona, the collared lizard feeds on a variety of insects as well as smaller lizards. PAUL AND JOYCE BERQUIST [OPPOSITE PAGE] Silica from volcanic ash dissolved in groundwater soaked into fallen prehistoric trees, crystallized as quartz and transformed the logs from wood to stone. GEORGE H.H. HUEY

BY GREGORY McNAMEE

though, the sun drives away the chill, accompanied by ever warmer breezes that stir the blooming evening primroses, Indian paintbrush, mariposa lilies, sunflowers, snakeweed, rabbit brush, buckwheat, peppergrass and salt bush that line the park's roads and trails.

The animals begin stirring, too, and, as the warmth comes to the land, you're likely to find a roadrunner waiting to race, a turkey vulture floating lazily along on thermal winds, a tarantula scurrying across the ancient ocean floor, and perhaps even a porcupine stretching out its spiny back and pondering the day's agenda.

In all but deep winter, Gunnison's prairie dog (*Cynomys gunnisoni*) — one of five prairie dog species in the United States — emerges as one of Petrified Forest's most visible denizens, though its population has been diminished due to the ravages of bubonic plague in decades past. Prairie dogs number few enough just about everywhere in their formerly broad range, but within the national park they find hospitality in a natural grassland unbroken by fences and undisturbed by grazing, a place that's ideally suited to their kind.

Weighing 2 to 4 pounds, a good size as these little rodents go, the *C. gunnisoni* take their hibernation seriously, disappearing below ground at the first sign of cold weather and there going about the business of producing the next year's batch of young. In early spring, when the pups, just weeks old, emerge from underground with their parents, their colonies become antic playgrounds full of "little heads popping up everywhere, busily going from mound to mound," as former park Chief of Interpretation Tessy Shirakawa puts it.

Of the six established colonies within the national park, three are easily accessible by visitors from the main road. The first, and largest colony, lives just off Exit 311 on Interstate 40, at the park's northern entrance. The colony numbers a few hundred individuals, though just how many depends on the severity of winter and other environmental factors.

Other prairie dog colonies, also called coteries, lie just beyond Long Logs, near the southern entrance to the park, and at Newspaper Rock, which stands at the center of the park and commands a fine view of the Puerco River valley and the oddly shaped rock formations called The Tepees. Extensively studied by wildlife biologists, these prairie dogs are inquisitive and even friendly, and most seem to have no particular fear of humans, but visitors are warned not to feed or touch them or any wildlife in the park, to avoid the transmission of disease from one species to the other and to help ensure that the animals do not become dependent on humans and lose the ability to fend for themselves.

Find a PRAIRIE DOG, and a GOLDEN EAGLE likely lurks nearby...

[OPPOSITE PAGE] Ribbons of runoff following a thunderstorm define the contours of the Painted Desert below Blue Mesa.
[TOP] Centuries after their habitation of the area, the ancient Puebloans continue to tell their secrets through the petroglyphs they left behind. BOTH BY GEORGE H.H. HUEY
[RIGHT] To avoid becoming dinner for one of its many predators, a Gunnison's prairie dog must remain ever vigilant. JOHN CANCALOSI
[ABOVE] Brilliant in late afternoon, wilted by morning, clusters of desert four o'clock blooms briefly delight the eye. GEORGE H.H. HUEY

Find a prairie dog, and a golden eagle likely lurks nearby, hoping to find a convenient meal. Fearsome from a small rodent's point of view and impressive by any measure, with their 8-foot wingspans and sharp talons, the eagles patrol the ground throughout the park, but they're especially numerous at Long Logs and Newspaper Rock. Joining the eagles are other skilled hunters; in the morning and evening, prime time for chasing game, the sky comes alive with American kestrels, prairie falcons and red-tailed hawks, while the ground empties of all but the most incautious mice, pocket gophers, kangaroo rats, white-tailed antelope squirrels, cottontail rabbits and prairie dogs.

A less vigorous hunter, the raven makes its home throughout the park as well. In spring, it seems, these noisy birds become even more vocal, squawking clamorously as if to announce the season — but, more likely, to demand food from visitors, both scarce in the lean months of winter. It's no accident that these highly intelligent, social birds gather at just the spots where humans do, at roadside picnic tables and parking lots leading to heavily visited places such as the Agate Bridge and Crystal Forest. It may take a heart as hard as petrified wood to refuse their croaked entreaties for food, but don't feel sorry for them: With spring's arrival of new insects, the birds do not lack for meals.

Other avian species add their songs, whistles and wingbeats to the air: here a northern mockingbird, there a bluebird, a brightly colored western tanager or kingbird, or a chattering house finch. Seasoned bird-watchers will have added these species to their life lists long ago, but Petrified Forest draws plenty of birders just the same,

for here spring also finds a dazzling parade of migratory species passing through the park. Birds such as Virginia rails, herons, egrets, geese, ibises and even pelicans make their way to better-watered and greener places far away.

Year-round residents, the deerlike pronghorns, often (but mistakenly) called "antelope," feed on sagebrush and grasses that grow abundantly on the plain alongside the Puerco River. If you catch sight of a pale blur against the multicolored rocks of the park, chances are good that you're seeing a pronghorn. With a distinctive white rump and curled horns, *Antilocapra americana* clocks in as the fastest land animal in North America, with speeds up to 70 miles an hour and covering the ground in 27-foot leaps at full run.

Whether on the go or at rest, pronghorns are easy to pick out in the park's open terrain. Look for them browsing along the railroad track that crosses the northern end of the park — or, if it's raining or windy, in the gullies and washes that comb the river valley, where they like to shelter. Lithodendron Wash, which branches off from the northwestern end of the park, proves a good place to find them in such weather. Smaller herds graze below Blue Mesa and Agate Mesa farther down the road.

As befits a place famous for its long-ago population of dinosaurs, Petrified Forest has a varied population of reptiles, and spring finds them emerging from dens and burrows to greet the warming sun. Collared lizards scamper about everywhere you look; side-blotched lizards race along ancient fallen logs; and striped whiptails, seemingly as fast as pronghorns, add another blur to the view.

The kingsnake, with its alternating bands of black and white, light brown or yellow, sometimes goes in pursuit of another inhabitant, the Western rattlesnake. The kingsnake seems to think nothing of its fellow snake's venom and will enjoy a meal of rattler when the opportunity presents itself. If you're patient and lucky, you may see one more of the park's venomous reptiles, the shy and altogether rare Hopi rattlesnake, a sensitive species in more ways than one — so do be sure to give it a wide berth.

Rare, too, remains the badger, a creature honored in Zuni, Navajo and Hopi art but not often seen in the wild. "Even most full-time, year-round park employees have yet to see" the very uncommon *Taxidea taxus*, says Chief of Resource Management Karen Beppler-Dorn. Still, good things come to those who wait, and park rangers say you might spot one of these slow-moving animals near Blue Mesa, where several sightings have been recorded in the last few years. Badgers also have been seen occasionally at Newspaper Rock and along the Painted Desert rim just outside the north visitors center.

[ABOVE] The most common toad in the Petrified Forest, the Great Plains toad, like other amphibians, does not drink water, but absorbs moisture through a patch of skin on its abdomen.
[FAR RIGHT] Sunset light enhances the stratified colors of the Painted Desert's Chinle Formation, sometimes described as a multilayered cake. BOTH BY GEORGE H.H. HUEY
[RIGHT] Although both male and female pronghorns grow and later shed horns every year, females' horns are rarely longer than their ears.
PAUL AND JOYCE BERQUIST

When night falls and most human visitors leave, Petrified Forest becomes "so quiet you can hear the grass grow — and can hear every bark and yip a coyote makes," says Shirakawa. Skinny and hungry after the long winter, coyotes are abundant indeed, as are the black-tailed jackrabbits after which they chase. Plentiful, too, are the Western spotted and the striped skunks, shy of humans and well equipped to ward off danger with their awful perfume. The nighttime sky is the province of horned and long-eared owls, which take over the work of patrolling the air from the now-resting hawks and eagles, and of bats, which greet the spring in astonishing numbers. Nesting in caves, rock overhangs and even the garages of park employees, the California myotis, small-footed myotis, pallid and Western pipistrelle species live in the park year-round. They join the occasional little brown, hoary, Brazilian free-tailed and silver-haired varieties, all of which feast on insects that rise from trees and grasses as the ground cools.

Spring in Petrified Forest — a fine season in an unforgettable place, a time announced by a tuneful symphony of whirring wings, of canine howls, of hooting owls and barking prairie dogs. Listen closely, and you may just hear the keening of Triassic ghosts as well, longing for the days when dinosaurs ruled this land. AH

ADDITIONAL READING: In the best-selling guidebook *Travel Arizona II*, seasoned travel writers and *Arizona Highways* photographic contributors describe where and how to create unique Arizona adventures. To order ($15.95), call (800) 543-5432; or order online at arizonahighways.com.

Gregory McNamee is the author of Blue Mountains Far Away: Journeys into the American Wilderness *and 20 other books. He lives in Tucson.*

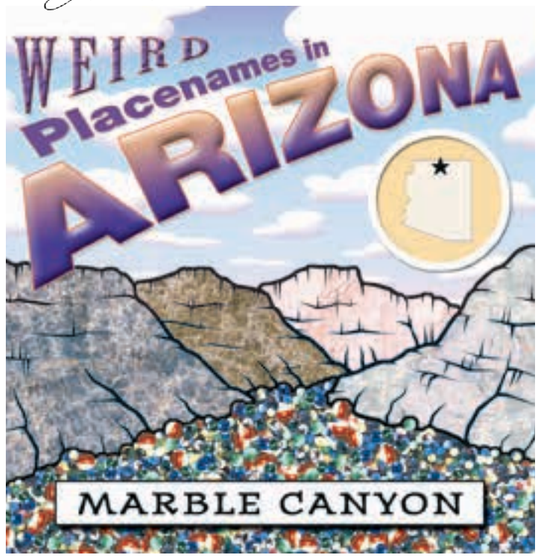
when you go

LOCATION: Approximately 250 miles northeast of Phoenix.
GETTING THERE: From Phoenix, take Interstate 17 north to Flagstaff. There follow Interstate 40 east to Exit 311, about 24 miles east of Holbrook. The park entrance and visitors center are just to the north of I-40; the 28-mile road through the park begins there and ends at the southern entrance off U.S. Route 180.
TRAVEL ADVISORY: Both park entrances have shops offering food, drink and other items. Elsewhere the park has no services, so carry water and snack food. Wear sturdy shoes for walking along the park trails. Please note that federal law prohibits collecting plants, rocks, fossils and petrified wood and feeding or transporting wildlife.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Petrified Forest National Park, (928) 524-6228.

humor

"I love you more today than yesterday, but not as much as tomorrow. Which, if my math is correct, gives me tonight off." *

IT'S Snow JOKE by Vicky Snow



Unusual Perspective

By Linda Perret

Among the world's largest telescopes is one located in the city of Sells, which means people as far away as Page better remember to draw their blinds.

NONLEGAL ADVICE

As a frequent traveler to the United States, I had become accustomed to the slower driving speeds you enjoy, compared with British and European motorists. However, a few years ago when speed limits were liberalized in the United States, I became confused as motorists were blatantly ignoring the posted speed signs.

In a diner in Sierra Vista, I met two traffic policemen and sought to clarify just what the speed limits were. The reply was simple: "Sir, if a lot of cars are overtaking you, then you're driving too slow but, if you are overtaking a lot of cars, then you are driving too fast."

LAWRIE KING
Knaresborough, England, United Kingdom

CAUGHT CHEATING

I was teaching a class in Social Issues in Education. I had declared the football team's chief quarterback "ineligible for cheating." The coach came in, furious, and demanded I reinstate his quarterback.

"Sorry, I think he cheated on the exam," I said. "My Phi Beta Kappa student is seated right beside your football player. The Phi Beta Kappa got the first nine questions correct, and on the 10th one he wrote, 'I do not know.'

"Your quarterback got the first nine questions correct, but on the 10th one he wrote, 'I don't know either.'"

ROGER W. AXFORD, PH.D.
Tempe

TIME MANAGEMENT

I grew up on a working cattle ranch in southeastern Arizona during the Depression years of the 1930s. With three uncles in the same business, I noticed at an early age how they all usually made their work easier by trying different ways of doing things.

Mosby Wilkerson, the oldest of the four brothers, had just installed a new propane-powered Servel refrigerator, and he was telling me how cold it kept the milk from their Jersey cow. When he offered me a drink, I expected him to skim the cream and pour the milk in two glasses. Instead, he reached in the cupboard for two lengths of hollow macaroni, handed me one and said, "No point in disturbing the cream; just run this to the bottom and drink all you want."

FORREST G. WILKERSON
Safford

LIZARD TRAINING

On one of our family campouts in the high desert country of northern Arizona, the grown-ups relaxed after supper to watch the sunset while the children ran around exploring. My 4-year-old grandson, Robby, came running up to us, hands outstretched, squealing with excitement.

"Look, I caught a lizard!" He showed us his striped prize and ran off again to join the other children. Several minutes later he was back, empty-handed, to announce with shining eyes that he had trained his lizard. "Really!" I said. "How did you do that?"

"Well," Robby said with proud satisfaction, "I put him on the ground and watch him, and whatever he does, that's just what I want him to do."

LINDA HUNTZINGER
Provo, UT

* From the Witworks® humor book *Marriage Is Forever . . . Some Days Longer* by Gene Perret. To order, call toll-free (800) 543-5432, or visit arizonahighways.com.

EARLY-DAY ARIZONA

"You, there, in the overalls," shouted the cross-examining lawyer. "How much are you paid for telling untruths?"

"Less than you are," retorted the witness, "or you'd be in overalls, too."

JEROME NEWS, AUGUST 12, 1911

TO SUBMIT HUMOR

Send your jokes and humorous Arizona anecdotes to Humor, *Arizona Highways*, 2039 W. Lewis Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009 or e-mail us at editor@arizonahighways.com. We'll pay $50 for each item used. Please include your name, address and telephone number with each submission.

Reader's Corner

I always make a wish when I see a falling star. Of course, the wish is usually that it doesn't fall on me.

Send us your jokes about meteors and shooting stars, and we'll pay you $50 for each one we publish.

destination

by SALLY BENFORD / photographs by DAVID H. SMITH

LOWELL OBSERVATORY in Flagstaff Embodies the Legacy of Arizona's VISIONARY ASTRONOMER

PERCIVAL LOWELL NEVER CONSIDERED himself a dreamer. A stargazer, perhaps, but never a dreamer.

In the summer of 1894, Lowell thought he had proof that intelligent life existed on Mars. The Harvard-educated mathematician, who hailed from Boston blue-blooded society, spent night after night perched on a lonely ponderosa pine-studded mesa above Flagstaff, gazing through a telescope at Mars, taking notes and making calculations. By the end of summer, Lowell decided he had enough information to publish his findings.

Lowell never proved his theory of life on Mars, but such theories sparked a firestorm of controversy about Martians, adding a fascination with space to the developing literary genre of science fiction. Author H.G. Wells published his novel *War of the Worlds* in 1898 amid the debate over Lowell's writings, but no doubt Lowell's greatest legacy lies in the Flagstaff observatory that bears his name. In 1966, Lowell Observatory was registered as a National Historic Landmark. Today, professional and amateur stargazers go to the observatory, one of the world's largest, privately operated, nonprofit astronomical research observatories. Lowell's 24-inch Clark refractor telescope, which he used for his Mars observations, now serves as an instrument for public viewing.

Even in the 21st century, Lowell seems to oversee the operation as he peers from a large painting that hangs in the observatory's Steele Visitor Center lobby. Hand on hip and staring straight into the future, Lowell stands amid modern-day and historical space observational devices. The center serves as the entry point for all observatory programs, telescopes and exhibits. People come to learn the observatory's history and for a chance to look through Lowell's telescopes.

As the two-hour walking tour begins, visitors file into Giclas Lecture Hall for a short presentation about the man who started it all and how the observatory's 27 full-time astronomers continue to conduct research. In the group of about 30, a woman asks about the "red shift." Terms like "LONEOS," "Kuiper Belt," "Io" and "interferometer" bounce around the room. It's enough to make a mere terrestrial's head spin. When a New Jersey couple admit they didn't know that Clyde Tombaugh discovered the planet Pluto here in 1930, public program assistant David Portree explains they will see Tombaugh's 13-inch Pluto Discovery Telescope.

Portree details astronomer V.M. Slipher's spiral nebulae discoveries, current star clusters and comet observations. He also describes the Lowell Observatory Near Earth Object Search (LONEOS), in which astronomers travel 15 miles southeast of Flagstaff to the observatory's Anderson Mesa site to look for asteroids that veer close to Earth.

Then the tour group heads outdoors for a short climb up a paved path leading to the 40-foot dome that holds the historic Clark telescope. Along the way, Portree tells visitors that Lowell died in 1916 and had his remains buried here on Mars Hill in a granite mausoleum covered in cobalt blue glass tiles.

Inside the Clark telescope dome, Portree pulls the 107-year-old telescope in a semicircle, demonstrating how it moves the same as it did in Lowell's day — manually. Pointing out historical trivia, he shows the group the dustcovers for the 6-inch and 12-inch lenses.

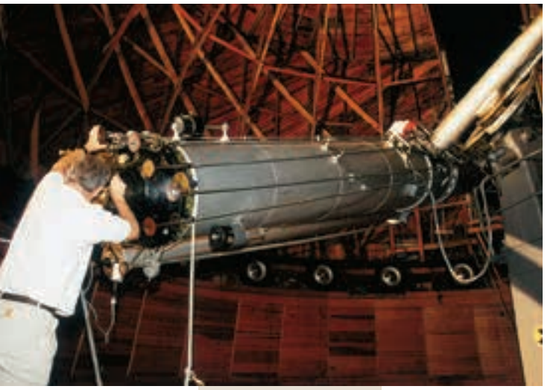
"When Lowell died in 1916, he left his entire estate to his widow, Constance Savage Lowell," Portree explains. "Constance didn't want to spend her money on lens covers, so the dustcover for the 6-inch lens is a saucepan stolen from the kitchen of the observatory's second director, V.M. Slipher. Likewise, a frying pan covers the 12-inch lens. Slipher's wife was a little upset over the misappropriation of her cooking utensils."

The 8-ton dome is made of native ponderosa pine. The dome rotates with the help of three electric motors and 24 Ford pickup truck tires from 1954. The Slipher Building and Rotunda Library holds Lowell's private book collection and studies of Mars, Slipher's spectrograph and information about how NASA used the observatory to map the moon for the Apollo Space Program.

Outside, the Pluto Walk, a 350-foot paved path, heads to the Pluto Discovery Telescope. The walk represents a scale model of the Earth's solar system, where 1 inch equals 1 million miles. Signs illustrate the planets' distances and sizes in relationship to the sun. The Pluto Walk begins at our sun and ends at the Pluto Dome with the sign for the ninth planet, Pluto. Inside,

[LEFT] Percival Lowell's mausoleum overlooks Flagstaff from the Mars Hill campus of the Lowell Observatory. [ABOVE] Susie Lemont peers through the eyepiece of the Clark telescope.

[ABOVE] With the Clark telescope by her side, Haley Landau explains the history of the huge telescope built in 1896. [LEFT] The walls of an old stone water tank remain near the Clark telescope dome.



[ABOVE] Visitors to Lowell Observatory may climb the ladder and gaze into the night sky through the historic Clark telescope.

Portree explains Tombaugh's Pluto discovery.

Back at the visitor center, the "Tools of the Astronomer" exhibit presents the equipment and techniques of modern astronomers and also provides information on astronomy careers and hobbies. A gift shop focuses on science-related items, including an impressive collection of astronomy books.

Perhaps the most popular attraction of Lowell Observatory comes at night, when visitors line up for a chance to look through the Clark telescope. Night tours are held year-round, weather permitting. According to public programs director Jeff Hall, astronomers pick out the most interesting celestial objects for public viewing, which can range from planets, like Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, to the moon, star clusters or other nebulae.

"We keep the telescopes open for as long as people want to stand in line," Hall says.

Before folks meander up the path to the telescopes, amateur astronomer Michael Hill presents information on the current night sky. He explains how to find constellations, how to spot satellites moving across the sky and the role heavenly objects played in Indian and ancient Greek cultures. This night the astronomers have chosen a galactic star cluster called M5 located 25,000 light years from Earth. He explains that the light seen through the telescope lens left M5 approximately 25,000 years ago.

"Who knows what it looks like today," Hill says. One can only imagine.

Lowell may not have considered himself a dreamer, but no doubt he had vision: "Imagination is as vital to any advance in science as learning and precision. . . . Let me warn you to beware of two opposite errors: of letting your imagination soar unballasted by facts, but on the other hand of shackling it so solidly that it loses all incentive to rise."

There's no doubt that Percival Lowell had a hand in some of man's most significant discoveries about our universe during the last 100 years. And from Mars to M5, Lowell would expect today's dreamers and stargazers to keep looking for whatever's out there. His observatory offers us the chance.

LOCATION: Lowell Observatory, 1400 Mars Hill Road, Flagstaff.
HOURS: November to March, daily, noon to 5 P.M.; April to October, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.
EVENING PROGRAMS: November to March, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 P.M.; April to May, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 P.M.; June to August, Monday through Saturday, 8 P.M.; September to October, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 P.M.
FEES: $4, adults; $3.50, seniors and college students; $2, ages 5 to 17; free, under 5.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (928) 774-2096; www.lowell.edu.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST IN FLAGSTAFF

All area codes are 928

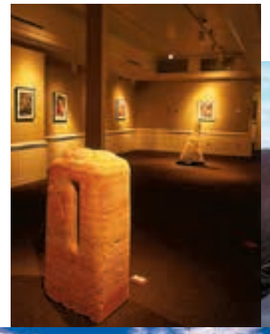
MUSEUM OF NORTHERN ARIZONA See regional art celebrating the cultures of Hopi, Navajo, Zuni and ancient people. Discover northern Arizona's dinosaurs, geology, fossils and native plants, as well as the history of the Colorado Plateau; Flagstaff, 774-5213.

RIORDAN MANSION STATE HISTORIC PARK The home of two pioneering Flagstaff families features Arts-and-Crafts-style architecture and more than 30 rooms filled with original artifacts; Flagstaff, 779-4395.

SUNSET CRATER VOLCANO NATIONAL MONUMENT Trails and scenic vistas allow visitors to see the 900-year-old volcanic crater up close. See how the volcano created "rivers" of black, hardened lava and surrounded the area with ash and cinders; Flagstaff, 526-0502.

WALNUT CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT Hike down a paved trail in this gorge to view cliff dwellings nearly a thousand years old. The visitors center museum houses the ancient residents' artifacts, showing how they worked and played; Flagstaff, 526-3367.

WUPATKI NATIONAL MONUMENT Once home to ancestral Puebloan people, four ancient pueblos sit atop a mesa; Flagstaff, 679-2365.



[CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT] The plaza in the heart of downtown Flagstaff is a favorite gathering spot for residents and visitors. Old Main Art Gallery displayed the stone sculptures of minimalist Robert Siracusa in a visiting exhibit. The stone pueblos at Wupatki National Monument were homes to Indians and later to the first park caretakers.

OLD MAIN ART GALLERY On the Northern Arizona University campus, Old Main houses galleries featuring historic furniture, silverworks and art, plus a collection of contemporary art; Flagstaff, 523-3471.

ELDEN PUEBLO ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT The project offers programs in archaeological concepts, skills and practices through a variety of activities at the Elden Pueblo; Flagstaff, 527-3475.

THE ARBORETUM AT FLAGSTAFF With 200 acres at an elevation of 7,150 feet, the botanical garden offers a wildflower meadow and the aromatic scent of herbs and nature trails; Flagstaff, 774-1442.

ARIZONA SNOWBOWL Go to ski in mid-December to mid-April; off-season, ride the scenic skyride up the mountain for a breathtaking view; Flagstaff, 779-1951; snow report, 779-4577.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PIONEER MUSEUM Changing exhibits depict the history of Flagstaff, including displays on logging, livestock, railroads and more. Standing exhibits feature U.S. Route 66 and the Arizona Rough Riders; Flagstaff, 774-6272.

by SAM NEGRI

HAL EMPIE, Small-town Artist With a Big-time Following

"Rattle again, Pete, an' if he don't jump this time, let 'em have it."

LAST MARCH, HAL EMPIE, Arizona's acclaimed pharmacist-artist whose career spanned most of the 20th century, faced the easel in his Tubac, Arizona, studio, daubing his brush at a painting that was about two-thirds done. That night, his daughter Ann Groves stopped by to hear him describe in detail his plans for the next day. The notion that there would always be a next day seemed a natural extension of Empie's wit and optimism, but the painting he was working on was never completed. The morning after his daughter stopped in to say goodnight, Empie collapsed and died.

It was March 26, 2002 — his 93rd birthday.

Hal Empie — his full name was Hart Haller Empie — was a major contributor to the early issues of *Arizona Highways*, and his illustrations helped develop the magazine's international renown.

He was born near Safford three years before Arizona became a state. Like many others in Territorial Arizona, Empie's family lived for several years in a little adobe house with a hard-packed dirt floor. Growing up in modest circumstances in a rural community apparently contributed to his powerful work ethic and his intuitive sense of the look and feel of the Arizona landscape. He started drawing and painting when he was very young, eventually polished his technique and developed an unmistakable style. His only formal training consisted of two three-week seminars offered by Frederic Taubes, an artist and prolific author of how-to books.

At 20 years old, Empie worked as both a pharmacist and an artist. The Arizona Historical Foundation says he was the youngest licensed pharmacist in Arizona history. In 1937, he purchased his pharmacy in Duncan, on the Arizona-New Mexico border east of Safford, later calling it Art Gallery Drug. The name made sense. His drugstore was also his studio. Between filling prescriptions, Empie painted landscapes, which he later framed and displayed over the soda fountain.

Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who grew up on a ranch on the outskirts of Duncan, remembered Empie and his store in the foreword she wrote for *Arizona's Hal Empie*, a biography written by Evelyn S. Cooper. "Among my fondest memories of 'going to town,'" O'Connor wrote, "were the inevitable stops at the Art Gallery Drug to see Hal, and often Louise [Empie's wife], to feel their warmth and hospitality, to have a root beer float seated at the soda fountain, and to look at the many Empie paintings displayed on the walls of the drugstore. The colors glowed. The scenes of local areas were dramatically depicted. On the way out, if we had a little money left, we would buy one of Hal Empie's amusing Kartoon Kards."

Empie's cartoons for many years were as much his trademark as were his oil paintings. In his cartoons he had great fun spoofing cowboys, horses, cows, tourists and anything else that could be loosely associated with Arizona's flora and fauna. On November 3, 2000, he wrote a note to Cooper, who was at work on his biography. He included his "self-portrait," a cartoon character wearing a cowboy hat with a hole in the crown. Empie, using his own spellings, wrote, "Because I have russeled cows in my spare time, the sheriff often decorated my sombrero with bullet holes." As an afterthought he wrote, "I am not serving time at present."

In the 1930s, *Arizona Highways* editors wanted to break up long columns of type, so they turned to cartoonists to liven the pages. Hal Empie's cartoons did just that.

In the days before interstate highways, Empie's drugstore in Duncan was on the main road between El Paso and Phoenix. His postcards sold for a nickel, and they went like hotcakes. For his first card, he drew a man running across the desert with a rattlesnake hooked to the back of his pants. Empie's caption read, "Duncan, Arizona. Just rattlin' through."

Empie's reservoir of stories was bottomless. For all his success, Empie never became pompous. He said the greatest compliment he ever received came from a 5-year-old boy who was watching him paint.

"Mister," the boy said, "you sure stay in your lines good!"

by TOM CARPENTER / photographs by RANDY PRENTICE

A 29-mile Drive to and From Six Mile Crossing on BURRO CREEK Reveals Diverse WILDLIFE

LIKE MOST FOLKS WHO LOVE ARIZONA, I have a soft spot for hard places. I offer no apologies for this affection. I've learned that even the most forbidding landscape holds beauty at its core. Appearances, particularly in the Arizona desert, are meant to deceive. Seen from the highway through the shimmering heat, the terrain does not beckon many. Those who are drawn off the pavement and into the distance, however, always discover some thing, some place of beauty that changes forever their perceptions. Six Mile Crossing on Burro Creek is such a place.

On a good Arizona map, trace down the line in northwest Arizona that separates Yavapai and Mohave counties. Where that boundary line intersects Burro Creek, you'll find Six Mile Crossing.

[ABOVE] Cottonwood and willow trees shade pebbly Burro Creek Crossing Road at Six Mile Crossing in the Upper Burro Creek Wilderness in west central Arizona. [LEFT] A half-moon hovers over a towering saguaro cactus and a massive granite boulder in the Upper Burro Creek Wilderness. [RIGHT] Marsh grass and willow trees surrounding a reflective pool deny their desert surroundings in a portrait of daybreak near Six Mile Crossing.

Burro Creek is a perennial stream that begins in the rocky southern reaches below Mount Hope on the 100,000-acre Spanish land grant, Luis Maria Baca Grant Float No. 5, south of Seligman, in Yavapai County. The creek flows southerly unchecked for 40 miles, then joins the Big Sandy River above the townsite of Signal in southern Mohave County. For 9 miles, the creek flows through the heart of the 27,440-acre Upper Burro Creek Wilderness.

To reach Six Mile Crossing, drive approximately 118 miles northwest from Phoenix on U.S. Route 93. At Milepost 132, a dirt road turns to the right with a sign that reads "Burro Creek Crossing Road," which

[TOP] Streambed moisture supports riparian trees such as cottonwoods and willows along the course of Burro Creek. [ABOVE] Protected by the Bureau of Land Management, wild burros in the Upper Burro Creek Wilderness are periodically relocated or put up for adoption to control the region's ecological balance. [LEFT] Its colors deepened by the setting sun, Red Knob reigns over a field of saguaro, prickly pear and cholla cacti, ocotillos and an imposing granitic rock formation near Burro Creek Crossing Road.

travel tips

GETTING THERE: Drive approximately 118 miles northwest from Phoenix on U.S. Route 93. At Milepost 132, turn right on a dirt road signed "Burro Creek Crossing Road," also known as Six Mile Crossing Road.
WARNING: Back road travel can be hazardous if you are not prepared for the unexpected. Whether traveling in the desert or in the high country, be aware of weather and road conditions, and make sure you and your vehicle are in top shape. Carry plenty of water. Don't travel alone, and let someone at home know where you're going and when you plan to return. Odometer readings in the story may vary by vehicle.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Bureau of Land Management Kingman Resource Area, (928) 692-4400.

is another name for Six Mile Crossing Road, as it appears on some maps.

This is as good a time as any to confess ignorance about the origin of the name Six Mile Crossing. My reliable references for name origins are mum on the matter.

From the dirt turnoff, the distance to the crossing is 14.5 miles. Another route to the crossing is the sandy track behind Nothing, Arizona, but that route is too soft for anything but a four-wheel-drive vehicle. And although it looks shorter on the map, the sand track is not graded, and Bureau of Land Management recommends the longer route for travel to Six Mile Crossing. The trip from Burro Creek Crossing Road is safer and more scenic.

Another sign greets you as you turn off the highway asphalt, and it quickens the pulse. "Primitive Road. Use at your own risk. This surface is not regularly maintained. Rough Road next 14 miles." It's a clean and smooth dirt road. Any high-clearance vehicle should have no problem making the trip in about 40 minutes at a leisurely pace, unless it has rained recently. With rain, the road gets sticky in some spots, sloppy in others. Other times it can be rough.

Volcanic activity defined much of the area's landscape 7 million years ago. Scientists describe the resulting jumble of metamorphic and sedimentary rock formations as "complicated geology." Cowboys just call it rough country.

The elevation at Milepost 132 is 2,600 feet. The dirt road climbs for the first 7.5 miles to an elevation of 3,400 feet near a basaltic formation called Red Knob.

There the road branches. The route heading north goes to a place called Sycamore Camp at the edge of the Upper Burro Creek Wilderness. Take the east fork, which continues toward the crossing.

The narrow road cuts into the hillside and winds down through paloverde and mesquite trees; saguaro, cholla and prickly pear cacti; thorny wands of ocotillo; spiky yuccas and grasses such as bush muhly and black grama. Take it slow and watch for approaching dust. Somebody may have to back up on narrow parts of the road if you encounter travelers heading the other way.

The massive flat-topped mountain a couple of miles to the west is called Hells Half Acre. With annual precipitation of less than 10 inches and daily temperatures regularly above 100 degrees, it may not technically be hell's half-acre, but I bet you can see it from there.

Around every turn, the landscape widens into open space, revealing terrain unchanged except by nature and time. Archaeological findings — grinding stones and projectile points — suggest that Indians lived in the Burro Creek vicinity, probably during seasonal migrations, beginning as early as A.D. 600.

"One lane cattle guard ahead. Bicycles cross with caution." One can only admire the perceived necessity of such a sign so far from pavement.

You pick up the subtle scent of water before the tops of dozens of cottonwood trees that shade the creek become visible around the last bend. There are several places to camp near the crossing, but none have improvements, such as portable toilets.

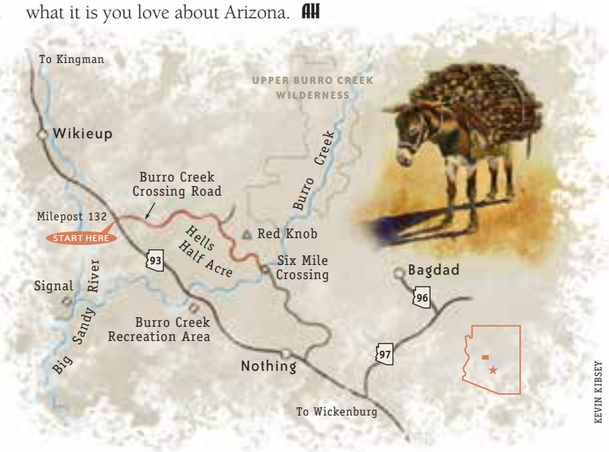
You can see the tailings dam of the Phelps Dodge-Bagdad copper mine approximately 8 miles away, but in the environmental parlance of our times, the dam's visual impact is minimal. You may spot other small mining efforts along the way to the crossing, but these were abandoned due to their unprofitable yields.

Since the 1870s, cattlemen who lived along Burro Creek have worked their tough cow ponies up and down the rough terrain, moving their herds with the seasons. As a result of the riparian improvement project underway at the crossing — a joint project with the Bureau of Land Management, the Arizona State Land Department, the Byner Cattle Company and the Phelps Dodge-Bagdad Copper Corporation — there are no cattle in the area.

Wildlife abounds here. Mosquitofish and longfin dace swim in the pools. From javelinas to herons, toads to soft-shelled turtles, raptors to rattlesnakes, this perennial and ancient stream attracts all the life that abides here.

For hiking upstream, you'll want to wear river sandals. The creek's braided channel runs through the banks of cottonwood and willow trees, so you'll get your feet wet eventually. If you spend the night, don't sleep directly on the ground. Ants run rampant, so watch where you put your feet and hands.

Return to the highway along the same route. Whether you go for a day of birding and a picnic or for a long weekend campout, Six Mile Crossing on Burro Creek will remind you of what it is you love about Arizona. AH



[ABOVE] Stark and imposing, Hells Half Acre looms beyond a stretch of rugged desert terrain.

MARK LARSON

Photograph a Lush Oasis in the Desert

photo workshop

Join **Friends of *Arizona Highways*** on an adventure in Havasu Canyon, a branch of the Grand Canyon that is home to three spectacular waterfalls. Our explorations of Havasu, Navajo and Mooney falls will reward us with stunning views of tranquil turquoise pools and give us plenty of chances to relax in an idyllic setting. Everywhere you turn there are chances to take wonderful photographs, whether you're making images from the unusual colors of the water, the exotic rock formations or of the creeks and caves that surround the falls.

Arizona Highways photographer Kerrick James brings energy and enthusiasm to this excursion, so bring your swimsuit and come play in the water May 22-26.

For more information or a free workshop brochure, please contact **Friends of *Arizona Highways*** at (602) 712-2004, toll-free at (888) 790-7042 or visit their Web site at www.friendsofazhighways.com.

Other Photography Workshops

June 23-29
From the bucolic Valley to the picturesque High Country, capture the essence of Yosemite National Park with Lewis Kemper

June 25-29
An expert Nikon instructor teaches us about digital photography in the magnificent Grand Tetons

July 19-24
Longtime Colorado resident Jim Steinberg shows us the best spots to find wildflowers in the area around Ouray

Searching for Gold

March 9; Apache Junction

Deep within the craggy Superstition Mountains east of Apache Junction, legend tells that a rich vein of gold awaits rediscovery. The forbidding Superstitions reportedly conceal the famous Lost Dutchman Mine, named for two Germans, or "Deutschmen," which locals confused to mean Dutch. In the 1870s, German prospectors Jacob Waltz and Jacob Weiser supposedly made a sensational gold strike somewhere in the depths of the mountain range. Weiser suffered an untimely end, some say at Waltz's hand, others suggest an Apache ambush. Waltz visited the mine every so often, but hid his route from anyone who tried to trail him. When he died, he left only a cryptic comment to guide future seekers.

The Dons of Arizona, a nonprofit group interested in Southwestern history and lore, spins this and other treasure stories during the **69th Annual Lost Dutchman Gold Mine Superstition Mountain Trek**. Featured events include guided hikes of various lengths, gold panning, Indian arts, live entertainment, a barbecue and craft demonstrations. Information: (602) 258-6016.

O'odham Desert Heritage

March 15; Ajo

In remote southern Arizona, a quiet Indian tribe, the Tohono O'odham, or "desert people," lives among jagged lava mountains and arroyos choked with dusty sagebrush. Once called the Papagos, a Spanish name meaning the "bean eaters," they grew crops to take advantage of the heavy floods following summer thunderstorms. The tribe would "sing down" the rains from torrid summer skies to nourish indigenous crops of beans, squash and corn. In their constant search for water and food, the Tohono O'odhams also culled wild grass seeds, roasted cactus stems and harvested saguaro cactus fruit.

Tribal members gather at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument to celebrate their heritage at the **13th Annual O'odham Day Celebration**. Activities include demonstrations of O'odham basket weaving and traditional uses of desert plants, pottery, storytelling, plus arts and crafts booths and live entertainment. Information: (520) 387-7661.

DAVID H. SMITH

The Hoop Dance is among the performances at the Heard Museum Guild's Indian Fair and Market.

Men of the Mountains

March 14-16; Oatman

Between 1800 and 1850, rugged mountain men braved the wild frontier to explore and exploit the West's great abundance. These hardy characters often wore clothing made of animal skins, such as the buckskin suit, because when fabric shredded in the outback, skins were the only ready replacement. Every spring, these solitary trappers would emerge from the lonely wilderness to trade their furs and socialize at planned gatherings.

Re-enactment buffs come together for a weekend of 1840s fun at the **Mountain Men Rendezvous** in the old mining town of Oatman, nestled in the bleakly picturesque Black Mountains. The three-day event features black-powder shoots, campfire stories, re-enactments of primitive camps, knife-throwing contests and craft exhibits at Trader's Row. Information: (928) 768-6222.

Other Events

Buckeye Bluegrass Review; February 28, March 1-2; Buckeye; (623) 386-2727. Bluegrass bands, jam sessions, arts and crafts and children's activities.

Heard Museum Guild's Indian Fair and Market; March 1-2; Phoenix; (602) 252-8840. Indian arts and crafts, ethnic food and entertainment.

Glencroft's Benefit Quilt Auction; March 7-8; Glendale; (623) 847-3004. Show and auction of quilts, antiques and collectibles.

Penzoil Copper World Indy 200 Weekend; March 21-23; Avondale; (602) 252-2227. Indy Racing League competition.

Antique Car Show; March 15; Mesa; (480) 644-2760. Model A Fords from 1928 to 1931.

Founder's Day; March 15-16; Marana; (520) 682-4314. Live entertainment, parade and games.

Arizona Flywheeler's 18th Annual Show; March 22-23; Cottonwood; (928) 282-7626. Antique engine and tractor displays, tractor pull, arts and crafts and entertainment.

Verde River Canoe Challenge; March 29; Camp Verde; (928) 567-0535. Celebration of the Verde River and a canoe launch.

Note: Dates and activities could change. Before planning to attend events, phone for fees and to confirm days and times.

Drive NORTHWEST of Phoenix and You're in for a BIG SURPRISE

RICK BURRESS

SOME FRIENDS OF MINE LIVE NEAR PHOENIX on the northwestern edge of the Valley of the Sun. Recently, I bought them a gift and was having it sent directly from the store. The clerk asked, "To whom is this package to be sent?"

I didn't answer immediately. Questions phrased in correct (I think) grammatical form rattle me a bit. Recovering, I gave her the name of my friends.

"And what address do you want it sent to?"

Thank goodness, she came down to my grammatical level by using a preposition to end a sentence with.

I gave her the street address.

"What city?" she asked.

I said, "Surprise."

She said, "Oh, of course, sir. We won't breathe a word of this until the package is delivered. But I must know the name of the city to deliver it to."

"Surprise," I said.

She said, "I don't want a surprise. I just want you to tell me what city to send it to."

"Surprise," I repeated.

She said, "Sir, people are waiting. I don't really have time to play games. Now what city, please?"

I said, "The name of the city is Surprise."

She said, "Next."

I said, "No, wait . . ."

Let me interrupt here to tell you that Surprise is the name of a lovely, active community in Arizona. It's located about 20 miles northwest of Phoenix. Sure, it is an unusual name for a city, but an innocuous one. I hate to think what sort of exchanges I would have had with that store clerk if the founding fathers had named it "None of Your Business, Arizona," or "I'll Tell You When I'm Good and Ready to Tell You, Arizona."

Why the unusual name? One story has it that when the town was first developed, someone took a look at it and said, "I'd be surprised if this place ever amounted to anything." That story's untrue.

Besides, the place has amounted to something. It has been Arizona's fastest growing city for three years running. It's the home of the West Valley Art Museum, whose five exhibit halls display artworks from around the world. Soon a new ballpark will be spring training headquarters for Major League Baseball's Kansas City Royals and Texas Rangers. That's certainly amounting to something.

In truth, Surprise, Arizona, borrowed its name from Surprise, Nebraska. In 1937, the Arizona town's founder, Homer C. Ludden, named it after his hometown in the Cornhusker State. So residents should be proud of the name of their community—and grateful. It might just as easily have been called Luddenberg or Homerville.

Of course, now the question is how or why was Surprise, Nebraska, called Surprise? Frankly, I think people just wanted a town named Surprise because they thought it would be fun. What sort of mischief can you have with a town named Upper Darby, for instance, or Conshocken? But Surprise presents some interesting possibilities.

You can start your own community newspaper and call it *Surprise Edition*.

If you sent a city delegation of residents to a convention of some sort or another, you'd probably become known as "The Surprise Party."

Suppose you were a dedicated scientist living and working in this town, and you discovered a new element to add to the periodic table. As the discoverer, you would earn the right to name this element. You could call it . . . that's right . . . the element of surprise.

If you opened a mortuary in the town, it would be a clever idea to call it "Surprise Endings." You probably shouldn't pay too much for the sign, though, because it most likely won't be there long. It won't attract much new business and certainly no repeat business.

But see how much fun the name Surprise can be?

Anyway, back to the gift I was sending to my friends who live there.

I finally convinced the clerk that the actual name of the city was Surprise.

She said, "My, that's a strange name for a city, isn't it? Now how about this other package?"

I said, "I'll just take that one with me."

You see, I also purchased something for friends of mine who live in Why, Arizona. That's right, the community of Why. However, considering the problems I had with this clerk over Surprise, if my friends in Why want their gift, they're going to have to come and pick it up. AH

In the book *Marriage is Forever, Some Days Longer*, author Gene Perret notes, "We were made for each other. You're a great cook and I'm a great eater." To order this book ($6.95 plus shipping and handling) or other Perret humor books, call toll-free (800) 543-5432. In Phoenix, call (602) 712-2000. Or use arizonahighways.com.

hike of the month

by CHRISTINE MAXA / photographs by STEVE BRUNO

KEVIN KIRSEY

Sterling Pass Trail in OAK CREEK CANYON Echoes Footsteps of a Notorious RUSTLER AND COUNTERFEITER

STEEP AND DEMANDING, THE 2.4-mile-long Sterling Pass Trail marks a historic route up a beautiful side canyon of Oak Creek Canyon. The path's background relates a shadowy side of Sedona's past and takes its name from the crook who lived and made mischief at the bottom of it.

The original Indian route probably was a pleasant place until a man named Sterling moved into the area. History doesn't reveal his first name, but his last name appears all over Oak Creek Canyon landmarks.

Sterling had a home in Sterling Canyon (near the fish hatchery in northern Oak Creek Canyon) where he counterfeited money. Just a little farther south, he had a second home in another lovely spot, also named Sterling Canyon, on the north side of Sterling Pass near Vultee Arch (formerly called Sterling Arch until Gerald Vultee's plane crashed on the canyon's north slope in 1938, killing him and his wife).

[LEFT] Early morning light sharpens the rough, jagged features of sandstone bluffs below Sterling Pass in Oak Creek Canyon near Sedona. [OPPOSITE PAGE] As testimony to nature's adaptability, a growth-stunted pine tree survives on its microsite atop a freestanding sandstone block surrounded by forest below Sterling Pass.

Sterling also stole cattle. After butchering a stolen cow in the northern Sterling Canyon, he would haul it to his other home. Local homesteaders, searching for their chattel, followed Sterling's tracks as he traveled from one canyon to the next. They caught him with his hands full of counterfeit money and rustled beef, tried him and threw him in the penitentiary.

The tawdry Sterling picked one of the nicest canyons in the Oak Creek drainage for his shenanigans. In the summer, a rich ponderosa pine forest shades much of the trail as it climbs between red rock walls. In the fall, the canyon fills with a passionate display of fiery colors from bigtooth maple trees.

The trail begins as a mad dash up a short, but steep, forested wall of Oak Creek Canyon. The path settles down to a more sensible climb as it heads to a slick-rock pour-off, contours its edge, then enters a captivating forest.

The moist environment cradled between red rock walls, which rise several hundred feet, nurtures a timberland of hardwoods and giant ponderosa pines above a spread of bracken ferns. Though still on the uphill, the trail wends docilely through this pretty forest.

By mile one, the path turns austere as it starts a steep, rugged climb out of the drainage, rising above the pines into the sunshine. The trail becomes more demanding the higher it climbs, but the panoramic views become more exquisite. An overlook gives hikers a chance to catch their breath and study the Coconino sandstone formations jutting from the canyon walls.

At Sterling Pass, hikers will have climbed almost 1,200 feet elevation in 1.7 miles. They can catch their breath again when they follow a path on the right to another overlook, where the stunning views — Dry Creek canyon system on the west and Oak Creek Canyon to the east — might take their breath away again.

From Sterling Pass, hikers may return to the trailhead for a shorter day hike or continue on the trail. The path zigzags through the pines down the other side of the pass into Sterling Canyon, the rustler's southern homestead, dropping 800 feet in three-fourths of a mile to the Vultee Arch Trail.

Hikers can take the short spur trail to Vultee Arch and then return the way they came. But if they find any stray currency on the trail, they'd better make sure it's authentic before spending it.

LOCATION: Approximately 120 miles north of Phoenix. **GETTING THERE:** From the intersection of State Route 89A and State Route 179, go north on State 89A, and drive 6.2 miles to the trailhead on the west side of the road, 200 yards north of the Manzanita Campground. **TRAVEL ADVISORY:** A Red Rock Pass is required when parking on national forest lands for recreation in Red Rock Country. Purchase passes at the Gateway Visitor Centers, on the Internet and at a variety of local vendors and self-pay stations. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Coconino National Forest, Red Rock Ranger District, (928) 282-4119; www.redrockcountry.com.

For families, novices and experts, *Arizona Hiking: Urban Trails, Easy Paths & Overnight Treks* features a trail mix ranging from urban-area preserves to the Grand Canyon. The softcover book brims with how-to and where-to-go information on more than 70 hikes, plus 120 color photos. To order ($16.95 plus shipping and handling), call (800) 543-5432. Or use arizonahighways.com.